

Airstrike at Bihac follows shelling

SARAJEVO (AP) — An airstrike was underway at the embattled town of Bihac late Friday, after Serb forces defied NATO warnings and pressed on with their offensive against the Bosnian enclave. The airstrike followed more Bosnian Serb shelling of Bihac, the key town in a region the United Nations has declared a "safe area." Earlier Friday, Serb forces closed to within one kilometre of the Bosnian army headquarters in the town of 70,000, said Claire Grimes, a U.N. spokeswoman (see inside). Hundreds of refugees were fleeing into the city centre, she said. Officials at NATO headquarters in Naples, Italy, which oversaw three airstrikes on Serb positions earlier this week, refused to comment, saying they could neither confirm nor deny an airstrike was underway. Word of the airstrike came from diplomatic sources. In Sarajevo, U.N. sources said Michael Rose, the U.N. commander in Bosnia, had threatened the Serbs late Friday afternoon with an airstrike if they continued shelling Bihac. The warning came after four Serb shells hit Bihac at 4 p.m. (1500 GMT), the sources said.

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French schools bar 31 girls with scarves

PARIS (R) — Thirty-one girls have been expelled from schools in four French cities for wearing Islamic headscarves in class, school officials said on Friday. Sixteen pupils were barred from classes in two lycées (secondary schools) in the eastern city of Strasbourg and six were expelled from a lycée in Mantes-la-Jolie, northwest of Paris, officials said. In addition, eight schoolgirls were barred from classes at the Lycée Faidherbe in the northern city of Lille, the headmaster's office said, while an Iranian girl of 10 was banned from her primary school in the central city of Clermont Ferrand. The recent expulsions bring to 68 the number of students kicked out of school for wearing headscarves since Education Minister Francois Bayrou issued a ban last September "all ostentatious religious symbols in public schools." Police and young Muslims from the Lycée Saint-Exupéry in Mantes-la-Jolie clashed last month after girls were barred from classes for refusing to take off their scarves, which in France are seen as symbols of Islamic fundamentalism and the suppression of women. At the time, the girls tried to block the school entrance to prevent the 1,500 other students from going to classes.

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EU to lift Syrian arms sales ban

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) foreign ministers will lift an eight-year-old embargo on sales of arms to Syria on Monday, following an improvement in relations. "The embargo will end," an EU diplomat said on Friday. "The decision is due to be taken when ministers from the 12-nation bloc meet a Syrian government delegation on Monday evening after a regular EU session. The ban was imposed in 1986 after allegations of Syrian involvement in a thwarted attempt to smuggle explosives onto an El Al Airliner. Other sanctions, such as bans on low-level diplomatic meetings, have been gradually lifted between 1987 and 1990, when Syria sided with the West in the Gulf war. "The arms embargo is the last remaining irritant to our relations," an EU official said.

Woman stabbed in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — An Israeli woman was stabbed in the back on Friday near a luxury hotel in the centre of Jerusalem, police said. Her condition and the circumstances were not immediately known, they said.

Convicted Bosnian appeals sentence

COPENHAGEN (AP) — A Bosnian Muslim has appealed his eight-year prison sentence for helping his Croat captors beat fellow war prisoners, his lawyer said Friday. On Tuesday, Refic Seric was sentenced in 14 cases of violently mistreating and assaulting fellow inmates. Two of whom died, in Bosnia-Herzegovina last year. Saric, 31, became the first person ever to be sentenced in a case concerning war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. He appealed the sentence to the higher court on Thursday. The jury's verdict concerning the question of guilt cannot be altered, according to Danish law.

S. Africa to host African cup

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South African soccer officials were jubilant on Friday after their country replaced cash-strapped Kenya as hosts of the 1996 African Nations' Cup finals. "This is a phenomenal achievement for a nation which joined the African Football Confederation (CAF) just two years ago," leading official Solomon "Six" Morewa told AFP. Kenya's decision to withdraw as hosts was announced Friday on Kenyan Television by Maalim Mohammad, the minister in charge of sports (see inside).

Air France offers Airbus to MEA

BEIRUT (R) — Air France has offered Lebanon's ailing Middle East Airline (MEA) three Airbus 300B4 aircraft to help modernise its ageing fleet, MEA Chairman Abdul Hamid Fakhoury said. He told Reuters in a telephone interview MEA was studying whether the planes fitted its needs. Mr. Fakhoury said Air France, which has a 28.5 per cent stake in the Lebanese carrier, made the offer last summer in response to MEA's request for a capital increase. MEA has asked its shareholders — who include the Bank of Lebanon, the Lebanese government and Kuwaiti investors — for \$150 million to finance a development plan designed to make it competitive after the ravages of the 1975-90 civil war.

IAEA upbeat on N. Korea talks

VIENNA (AFP) — North Korean and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) officials have held "constructive" talks on freezing Pyongyang's controversial graphite nuclear reactor programme, a spokesman for the world's nuclear watchdog said in Vienna Friday.

Jordan asks for clear EU stand on Yugoslavia, Mideast

Crown Prince offers to launch Bosnia initiative in cooperation with Europe, U.S.

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan asked the European Union (EU) on Friday to make a clear policy statement on crisis areas in the Middle East and in former Yugoslavia.

Addressing a news conference during a three-day visit to Brussels, Prince Hassan said he hoped the EU's summit in Essen, Germany, on Dec. 9 would make the bloc's viewpoint clear on both the Middle East and former Yugoslavia.

"My hope is that out of Essen we could see ... a foreign policy statement by Europe, maybe the first this

decade, on the totality of how to achieve security and stability (in the Eastern Mediterranean region)," he said.

Prince Hassan said he was deeply troubled by recent developments in Bihac, a Bosnian town which looks set to fall to advancing Serb forces. Jordan has 3,000 peacekeeping troops in Croatia and Bosnia.

"We hope that the violence (in former Yugoslavia) can be contained in the weeks and months ahead, particularly during the winter months," said Prince Hassan.

Prince Hassan called for an immediate initiative to prevent the military escalation in

Bihac.

Jordan is ready to crystallise, in cooperation with the EU and the United States, a solution to the Yugoslav conflict.

On Thursday Prince Hassan voiced his appreciation to the Jordanian peacekeeping forces stationed in former Yugoslavia.

In a message to these forces following the escalation of fighting in the area, Prince Hassan said cultural and civilised dialogue was the only means for establishing global peace.

Prince Hassan said Jordan had advocated constructive and civilised dialogue

through interfaith dialogue and dialogue among the various religious schools.

"Such dialogue can contribute to the formulation of a new humanitarian world order, benefiting the entire human kind," the Crown Prince said.

Prince Hassan, who was planning to visit the Jordanian peacekeepers, said dialogue can spare the mankind havoc, disasters and further displacement.

He lauded the integrity, self-discipline and neutral performance of the Jordanian peacekeepers, and wished them success in discharging their duties.

At his press conference on Friday, he appealed to European nations to become involved in the Middle East peace process.

"A situation has prevailed for too long in Europe where Europeans have said they will not involve themselves in peacekeeping in the Middle East because they do not want to jeopardise American efforts," Prince Hassan said.

The Crown Prince, who met EU and Belgian officials during his Brussels visit, hoped a bilateral agreement would be reached early next year with the EU.

A EU statement said the two parties had expressed their satisfaction with the success of exploratory talks on an association agreement held in Amman on Nov. 7.

Prince Hassan's trip precedes a barrage of visits to



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and European Union Commission President Jacques Delors pose for photos at the EU head-quarters prior to their meeting on Thursday (AFP photo)

8 killed in Palestinian fighting in 'Ain Al Hilweh

'AIN AL HILWEH CAMP, Lebanon (Agencies) — Eight Palestinians were killed and 15 wounded on Friday in day-long fighting between supporters and opponents of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in Lebanon's biggest refugee camp. Palestinian and Lebanese security sources said.

They said fighting erupted before dawn when 400 pro-Arafat guerrillas, reinforced by 150 fighters from Rashidiyeh camp near the southern port of Tyre, seized six posts manned by some 200 dissidents.

The dissidents, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Munir Maqdash, won back three of the positions after a day of bitter fighting, the sources said.

Fighting with machineguns and anti-tank rockets spread across 'Ain Al Hilweh after Mr. Arafat's men took over the posts and six people died in the opening battle which raged for five hours.

Many of 'Ain Al Hilweh's 75,000 residents feared the fighting could develop into an inter-Palestinian mini-war in Lebanon's 12 camps, home to some 400,000 Palestinian refugees.

"(Last week) there was a massacre in Gaza and today in 'Ain Al Hilweh," said refugee Ahmad Fa'oor, referring to the killing of at least 12 Palestinians by police of Mr. Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in

the Gaza Strip on Nov. 18. "We're frightened the situation may continue and lead to something dreadful," Mr. Fa'oor said. "We cannot bear this any more, our nerves are wrecked and this is a miserable situation."

Col. Maqdash, former head of the forces of Mr. Arafat's Fateh group in Lebanon, now heads a small breakaway group opposed to the PLO-Israel peace deal. Mr. Arafat replaced him last year after he called for the PLO chief's resignation over the peace deal.

Palestinian sources said Col. Maqdash has become pro-Islamist in the past year and has links with Lebanon's militant Hizbollah (Party of God). But he still keeps the name Fateh for his group.

"This traitor Arafat has to move away from our Palestinian people," Col. Maqdash told reporters in 'Ain Al Hilweh, calling Friday's clashes "massacres" committed by Mr. Arafat.

Palestinian sources said 13 guerrillas and two civilians were wounded as the two sides fought in the sprawling camp beside the port of Beirut, 40 kilometres south of Sidon.

Six guerrillas, three from each side, died in the first and hardest round of fighting before dawn. A civilian and an Arafat fighter were killed as clashes continued during Friday.

Opponents of the fighting appealed from loudspeakers

for residents to join a march in protest at the inter-Palestinian bloodshed, but fewer than 100 refugees turned out for the march.

Sidon residents could hear sporadic explosions or the crackle of machinegun fire throughout the day. The sources said rocket-propelled grenades hit residential areas of Sidon.

Mansour Azzam, a leader of the dissidents, warned Mr. Arafat's men to pull out the reinforcements sent from Rashidiyeh.

"Take them back or we will send them to you in body bags," he told Lt. Col. Sultan Abu Al Ainnah, the Fateh commander in Rashidiyeh, in a telephone conversation.

The clashes erupted before dawn when Fateh guerrillas stormed offices run by Khaled Shayeh, an ally of Col. Maqdash, a cultural centre and an empty kindergarten in the camp.

Dozens of families fled to the nearby southern port of Sidon.

Mr. Arafat's faction has fallen out of favour with many long-term refugees in Lebanon because they were left out of the deal launching limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The Fateh guerrillas captured the buildings after fighting with rockets, machine-guns and mortars but their rivals pushed them back to the northern edge of

Gaza tension cools, but Hamas reschedules march

Rabin says death sentence given to Palestinian bomb-maker is a mistake

Combined agency dispatches

GAZA CITY — The Islamic resistance Movement, Hamas, on Friday postponed for 24 hours a mass rally in Gaza City seen as test of fragile peace deal with the Palestine National Authority (PNA).

Hamas also appealed to its militants to turn their guns on Israel rather than the Palestinian police.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said meanwhile he was against the execution of a Hamas bomb-maker who was sentenced to death for an attack which killed six people.

A military court in Jenin on the West Bank on Thursday passed the sentence on Said Badarnah for making the device which killed five Israelis along with a suicide bomber on a bus north of Tel Aviv on April 13.

Hamas said the attack was in retaliation for the Feb. 25 massacre at Hebron's Ibrahim mosque.

"It would be wrong to carry out the death sentence," said Mr. Rabin on his return from receiving a peace award in Spain.

"Israel has always followed the same policy up until now. No government, regardless of its composition, has agreed to apply the death sentence to terrorists."

"This is the right policy," he added.

The only convict executed in Israel was the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichman in 1962.

Mr. Rabin, who is also defence minister, met Chief of Staff Ehud Barak who has the power to commute the sentence.

Military courts in Israel have only rarely passed death sentences, and they have so

far all been commuted to life imprisonment.

Mr. Badarnah said after being sentenced that he would be "happy to die" for his cause. "I advise every Jew, to convert to Islam or emigrate because Hamas has a long reach," he warned.

The court in the occupied West Bank town of Jenin ruled that Mr. Badarnah was responsible for the death of the five Israelis as well as the Palestinian suicide bomber.

It said the death penalty was an "exemplary punishment to counter the new phenomenon of suicide attacks."

"So far, life imprisonment has not deterred this organisation (Hamas), and so we must now find a new response," the three judges said in their statement.

"Although a reaction from the international community is only to be expected, this court has the power and it has the courage to issue a death sentence."

The unusually stiff ruling seemed an effort by Israel to confront a rash of suicide attacks. The worst by Hamas was an Oct. 19 bus bombing in Tel Aviv in which 22 people were killed.

Still, Israel generally avoids meting capital punishment so that it can trade prisoners for Israeli captives held by Arabs. Also some feared that the death sentence might prove an incentive to zealots who believe death at the hands of the enemy leads to paradise.

"Until now Israel has not executed a single Palestinian terrorist and I think it was right," Mr. Rabin told Israel Radio. "It would be a mistake to carry out a death sentence."

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres also objected to the ruling. He told economists in

Tel Aviv Friday he was "proud that Israel isn't a nation of the gallows," the radio said.

Mr. Peres also argued that the death penalty would not deter suicide attacks, as some army officers argue. He reportedly said that anyone "knowing he has a death penalty over his head will fight harder than someone who knows there's a chance he could survive."

Leftist lawmakers like Avraham Burg said the sentence was shameful. "The person has not yet been born who has the right to extinguish another life, whether he be a murderer or a judge."

Right-wing lawmakers supported the sentence and urged its implementation.

Hamas leaders said the judgment would lead to more bloodshed.

"Violence only leads to more violence," said Sheikh Hamed Betawi, a Hamas leader appointed by Mr. Arafat as deputy justice minister in the self-rule government.

"If Israel thinks that this sentence will decrease the number of attacks, then they are mistaken."

More than 6,000 worshippers turned up at Palestine Mosque on Friday, a week after bloodletting between Muslim activists and Palestinian police left 14 people dead and more than 150 wounded. It was the worst internal violence since self-rule began in May.

Israeli forces in the Gaza area were put on alert in case any fresh rioting at the mosques spilled over towards Jewish settlements. But the march was postponed until later in the weekend as torrential rains drenched Gaza City.

(Continued on page 7)

Israel and PLO to set a date for elections

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will meet in Brussels on Monday to try to set a date for long-delayed elections to a council running autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, foreign ministry officials said Friday.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat will also discuss who would be eligible to sit on the council and how much authority to grant them, the officials added.

The decision to hold the negotiations in Brussels was taken during a meeting Thursday in Oviedo, Spain, between Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the cabinet said.

Negotiations on holding elections were to have resumed in Cairo on Tuesday following a five-week suspension. Israeli officials could not say if the Brussels talks would last several days before shifting back to Cairo.

Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat will meet on the eve of a meeting in Brussels of donor countries, which pledged to provide \$2.4 billion in aid over five years to the Palestinian National Authority.

In Brussels, diplomats said Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres will meet EU foreign ministers Monday.

Mr. Rabin has envisaged the immediate holding of elections under a plan which sees the Israeli army temporarily withdraw from population centres, it was reported earlier. The elections are the crucial next stage of autonomy.

A PLO official in the Gaza Strip, Suifan Abu Zayda, im-

(Continued on page 7)

Government to send JD 1.65b budget to legislature this week

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is expected to endorse a JD 1.650 billion fiscal budget for 1995 and present it to Parliament this week, Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said Friday.

The budget, reflecting an increase of 10 per cent over that of 1994, envisages local revenues at JD 1,438 million, up JD 168 million from this year's projections, and foreign assistance in various forms at JD 147 million.

Current and capital expenses are estimated at JD 1.33 billion and debt-servicing at JD 128 million. In addition, allocations are also made of JD 160 million for pension and retirement compensation.

Sources said the Council of Ministers discussed the budget in two sessions last week but could not finalise the draft because of disagreements by some of the ministers who sought higher allocations for their ministries.

But Dr. Anani, asked about the "differences" — that the sources said had prompted at least two ministers to threaten to resign — said: "There is no unusually strong differences. It is usual that ministers demand higher

allocations for their ministries in the budget."

Without commenting on the reported "threats" of resignations, Dr. Anani expressed confidence that the budget "will be presented to Parliament before Dec. 1 as constitutionally demanded."

Other sources said compromises were being worked out within the government to settle the differences. Ex-ministers say that demands for higher allocations are a regular feature during budget sessions of the Cabinet and no minister really carries out the threat to quit the government.

Final figures of the budget are subject to changes depending on the deliberations of the Council of Ministers this week. However, the sources said they did not expect the preliminary figures to undergo any significant changes.

Preliminary figures indicate that the budget would project a surplus of local revenues over expenses, including debt servicing, which was excluded from the 1994 budget, described by Finance Minister Sami Gammoah as Jordan's first deficit-free budget.

Capital expenses are estimated at JD 420 million, up JD 100 million for the year 1994, and development projects to be allocated JD 285

million from local revenues and another JD 135 million from loans and grants.

Local revenues — taxes, customs duties and fees on real estate transactions as well as other fees such as licensing and related charges — are estimated at JD 1,438 million, while current and capital expenses — excluding debt services and pension and compensation allocations — are projected at JD 1,330 million.

Parliament watchers said opposition deputies, led by the Islamic Action Front bloc, were bracing themselves to level scathing criticism of the government during the debate on the budget if only because of frustration over their inability to block parliamentary endorsement of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty signed early this month.

"They are sure to pick large holes in the entire budget and let fireworks fly across the floor," said an observer, noting that endorsement of the fiscal budget is often seen as a confidence vote in the government.

But, the budget is not expected to undergo any major changes in Parliament and would pass the legislature before Dec. 31 as constitutionally stipulated.

كلامنا للأصل

Geagea's trial deferred amid defence protests

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The trial of former Lebanese Christian warlord Samir Geagea here Friday was postponed as the court said one of its five judges had fallen ill.

Defence lawyers said the trial was postponed until a date to be announced later, because they had threatened to pull out in protest at their client's detention by the army.

The court, during a brief second hearing in the trial which opened on Saturday, also denied two motions by Mr. Geagea to address the bench.

"The session was postponed to deprive us of our right to protest and out of fear that we will quit," Assad Abi Raad, one of Mr. Geagea's team of lawyers, told AFP.

The defence wants Mr. Geagea to be removed from a cell at the Defence Ministry, where he has been held since his arrest in April on charges of involvement in a February church bombing which killed 11 worshippers.

French lawyer Francois Patrimoine, a member of the defence team, criticised Mr. Geagea's incarceration at the Defence Ministry because "there is no prison there which conforms to regulations."

"The defence should be free to meet with our client," Mr. Patrimoine told a news conference.

Court President Philippe Khairallah at first postponed the trial until Saturday because one of the judges was ill. Later he and that session was also off, without setting a new date.

"Just wait and see. There will always be a judge out sick," Mr. Abi Raad said.

Mr. Geagea, whose trial opened last week to applause from hundreds of supporters

inside and outside the court, looked very tense and pale on Friday. His is the first post-war trial, and expected to be the last, of a former militia chief.

He faces a possible death sentence for alleged involvement in the church bombing and the 1990 murder of rival Christian leader Dany Chamoun and his family.

Mr. Geagea is being tried by the Court of Justice, whose verdicts are not subject to appeal.

He headed the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia from 1986 until the end of the 1975-1990 civil war, when it was disbanded. Mr. Geagea went on to form a political party which was outlawed after the church bombing.

Some 2,000 supporters, family lawyers and journalists packed the Palace of Justice to witness Lebanon's most sensational trial since the civil war.

The defence had also demanded a postponement, saying lawyers were allowed only 30 minutes alone with the defendants to prepare and Judge Khairallah asked a prosecutor to check into the matter.

Hundreds of troops ringed the court and manned rooftops as Mr. Geagea's and two co-defendants, including LF second-in-command Fuad Malek, faced the tribunal accused of planning and ordering the bombing of our Lady of Deliverance Church north of Beirut.

Eleven people died and 59 were wounded in the Feb. 27 blast.

Mr. Geagea, whose trial began on Nov. 19, has alleged a plot to destroy the LF which he turned into a political party in 1991 opposed to Syria's political dominance in Lebanon.

Iraqi Kurdish parties sign peace agreement

ANKARA (R) — The two major Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, long divided by factional fighting, signed a peace deal on Thursday promising elections after a May census of the Kurdish region, the Kurdistan regional government (KRG) said.

"Today the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) announced a 14-point peace agreement to end the state of hostility and tension between the two parties," the KRG office in London said.

"The two parties agreed on conducting a population census to prepare an electoral register before 19 May 1995, to be followed by a free and fair general election," it added.

Fighting between KDP and PUK factions, as well as religious groups from the Islamic Movement of Iraq Kurdistan (IMI), erupted in the three Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq provinces of Sulaimaniyah, Erbil and Dahuk in May and again in August.

The fighting jeopardised the democratic experiment in Iraqi Kurdistan, set up as a haven under Western protection after the Iraqi army crushed an uprising in 1991.

Elections were held in 1992, which gave equal power to the KDP and PUK, but the two parties found joint leadership difficult to sustain

due to dual decision-making and internal one-upmanship. New elections were scheduled for next May, but little preparation had been made to lay the ground until recently.

According to the deal, KDP leader Massoud Barzani and PUK leader Jalal Talabani agreed to set up joint political leadership to oversee the agreement.

The present 50-50 rule will, however, continue until the next election, the KRG said. The agreement, signed in Erbil, capital of the Kurdish-controlled Iraqi province of the same name, forbids the use of violence and arms to solve disputes and bans single parties from monopolising political and organisational work in any region, as is currently the case.

The agreement proposes to widen the base of the de facto Kurdish government by including other parties in the administration, such as the IMI, the Communists and minority parties.

The KDP and PUK will also determine government policy towards the Iraqi umbrella opposition group, the Iraqi National Congress.

"The parties pledged to work by this agreement until the end of this century," the statement said.

But an Iraqi Kurdish group based in Turkey said factional turmoil had not ended.



RALLY IN TEHRAN: More than 100,000 women, several hundred of them holding machine guns, march during a rally at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran on Thursday to

celebrate Mother's Day in Iran. Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei pardoned 190 women prisoners to mark a religious figure's birthday, Tehran radio said (AFP photo)

Lebanon deputy arrested for questioning on drugs

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Police arrested Shiite Muslim Deputy Yahya Shamas hours after his immunity was lifted by parliament on Thursday so that he could be prosecuted for dealing in drugs, judicial sources said on Friday.

They said a judge would interrogate Mr. Shamas, who has denied the charge, on Friday and decide whether he should be released or not.

Friday that Yahya Shamas, a Shiite Muslim from the eastern Bekaa Valley region, was taken into custody in Beirut four hours after parliament's vote on Thursday.

"No one is above the law, he will be interrogated before a charge is formally levelled," Lebanon's Prosecutor-General Muntif Oweidat said. He did not spell out what charges would be filed.

Mr. Shamas hails from one of the most powerful Shiite clans in the Bekaa, long among the world's main narcotics producing regions.

It was the first time since the Lebanese parliament was formed following independence from France in 1943 that a member had lost his immunity.

Mr. Shamas was also the first Lebanese deputy to have his immunity lifted in a drugs case. He then accused the 128-member parliament and the government of being full of drug dealers.

Mr. Oweidat demanded last month that Mr. Shamas' immunity be lifted, saying he had evidence of his involvement in drug dealing.

Mr. Shamas faces up to seven years in jail if convicted.

Before a campaign to eradicate illegal crops which began last year, the Bekaa Valley was a centre for cultivating, processing and trading drugs during the 1975-90 civil war.

Mr. Shamas appealed to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to protect him and his family, saying the drug charges were levelled after a "sensitive situation" arose

between him and Brigadier Ghazi Kanaan, head of Syrian army intelligence in Lebanon.

In 1992, the government launched a campaign to end the narcotics trade which, by United Nations estimates, once brought an annual income of \$500 million to Lebanon.

Since then, hundreds of acres (hectares) of hashish and opium cultivation have been destroyed in the Bekaa. Syrian troops stationed in the Bekaa have been supporting the crackdown, which will deprive several Middle East groups of their lucrative income.

In his defence in parliament, Mr. Shamas claimed that the narcotics charge was "fabricated against me by ranking Lebanese and Syrian officials because I refused to sell a disputed piece of land in the Bekaa."

Speaking before his arrest, he named Roy Hgawi, the elder son of Lebanon's Presi-

dent Elias Hrawi, and Gen. Kanaan as his opponents.

Syria has 40,000 troops serving as peacekeepers in Lebanon to prevent the reignition of the 1975-1990 civil war, which made Syria the undisputed master of this country.

Roy Hrawi issued a statement saying he would sue Mr. Shamas for libel. Gen. Kanaan, whose headquarters is in the Bekaa, made no comment.

Mr. Shamas has said he had bought the land for \$8 million in April, but its value had since climbed to \$20 million.

He appealed to Syrian President Assad to "personally intervene to ensure my personal security and that of my family."

He added: "I am certain I am going to be arrested right away and I am certain too that I am going to be held somewhere in Lebanon to pressure me into giving up the land."

Turkish army targets Kurd villages

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Forcibly evacuating and even torching Kurdish villages in southeastern Turkey is now a central part of the military's 10-year battle against Kurdish rebels, villagers and human rights activists say.

Local human rights officials say nearly 1,900 villages in the southeast — or 16 per cent of the area's 12,000 settlements — have been partly or fully emptied, often under military pressure.

More than 500 settlements were evacuated and many burned down in the first 10 months of this year.

"Nothing has changed here, just the pressure is getting worse and things are being done more openly," said Halit Temli, head of Turkey's human rights association's Diyarbakir office.

Such reports were backed up by a 21-year-old member of the security forces in an interview with Reuters on Thursday near Diyarbakir, the administrative centre of the region.

"What else can we do? These people are supporting the terrorists. (The guerrillas) will only be finished off when all the villages in the region have been burned and destroyed," the man said.

The goal of the security forces apparently is to cut communication between guerrillas from the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and civilians in the overwhelmingly Kurdish region.

The PKK has long relied on villages, especially those nestled in the mountains, to provide logistical support such as food, lodging and information about troops movements.

The guerrillas, estimated at 10,000 to 15,000 in the region, have not shied away from force to themselves, murdering Turkish teachers and attacking families of state-paid village guards. They have also many backers.

"For better or for worse, the PKK is the only group in Turkey fighting for the Kurdish identity and many people have supported it for this reason," said a lawyer in the region, who is critical of the PKK.

The PKK's battle has been helped by Turkey's long-standing refusal to allow Kurdish-language television, radio and education, among other policies.

Now, the activities of the security forces have only pushed people even further

into the arms of the guerrillas.

"When your village is burned and you have no place to go the easiest thing is to join the guerrillas in the mountains and take revenge," said the lawyer.

Turkish officials deny the military is responsible for the burnings and evacuations, blaming instead guerrillas dressed as soldiers.

But State Minister for Human Rights Azmet Koyluoglu has also blamed the armed forces for torching villages in Tunceli province, calling it "state terrorism."

He accused the PKK of "acts of terrorism" in other regions. Displaced people tell a tale of intimidation by the security forces.

"Last month the soldiers gave us two hours to leave our village because we wouldn't join the local militia," said a man who abandoned his village near Maradin.

Although Turkey's approach to the rebels has never been gentle, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's rise to power in June 1993 seemed to give the military a free hand against the PKK.

"Either it will finish or it will finish," said Ms. Ciller of

the PKK, whose battle has left over 13,000 dead.

A massive deployment of troops — some 300,000 soldiers, special teams, police and government-financed Kurdish militia — this year drove the PKK from many of the region's cities while the guerrillas' mountain hideouts were heavily bombed.

But over the past few months reports of clashes have started to rise as the guerrillas seek to establish their positions before the onset of winter, residents report.

The heaviest fighting is now in the Tunceli province, where PKK regional commander Semdin Sakik and 2,000 guerrillas are concentrated in the inaccessible 30-kilometre-long kutuderesi ravine and 3,000-metre high munzur mountains.

Since the military launched a big offensive in mid-September, close to 40 Tunceli settlements inhabited by 5,000 people have been abandoned. Yet the insurgency continues.

"It doesn't matter what they do to us, because this battle will not end until we get full rights," said a municipal official in Tunceli.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Belarus to expel two Turkish diplomats

MINSK (R) — The former Republic of Belarus said on Friday it would expel two Turkish diplomats for spying but did not give a deadline for them to leave. Foreign Ministry spokesman Igor Poluyan said the two diplomats, who had the rank of attaché, had been declared persona non grata "for actions incompatible with diplomatic status," the common phrase used to denote spying. The ministry handed over an official protest note to the Turkish embassy but did not specify whether the two were still in the country or how long they would be given to depart. Mr. Poluyan said by telephone. The Belarus KGB security police said in a statement that authorities on Thursday detained a Belarus citizen "who had been recruited by Turkish agents." On Nov 24 in Minsk, "there was an attempt to transfer intelligence material to Turkish special service agents acting under the cover of the Turkish embassy in Belarus," said the statement, published in Minsk newspaper on Friday. Mr. Poluyan said it was the first time since Belarus gained independence in 1991 that a foreigner had been declared persona non grata. A foreign ministry official, who declined to be named, said the Turkish embassy might be requested to relocate from its present building, which also houses the Commonwealth of Independent States headquarters and the Ukrainian embassy.

Istanbul bans mushrooming after 18 die

ISTANBUL (R) — Istanbul health officials have banned wild mushroom hunting after 18 people died of poisoning and about 175 fell ill. Hurriyet Yilmaz, of the health department, said on Friday the ban on collecting, buying and selling wild mushrooms was issued in response to the outbreak. More than 125 people were treated and released. Warnings were issued over state-owned TRT television and forestry officials have been asked to post notices near popular mushrooming sites. Officials blame heavy rains that have created ideal conditions for wild mushrooms, and lack of knowledge by would-be gourmets.

Floods hit 19 Iranian provinces

NICOSIA (AP) — Torrential rains have flooded several Iranian provinces, damaging thousands of homes and swathes of agricultural land. Tehran Radio reported Friday. The broadcast quoted an interior ministry official as saying 19 cities and more than 700 villages in 15 of Worst hit were the provinces of Ilam, Kermanshah, Huzestan, and Lorestan in the west, and Hamedan in central Iran. The radio quoted the unidentified official as saying that 10,000 homes and shops of offices were damaged, along with 1,000 hectares of agricultural land. Several rivers overflowed, and some key bridges were washed away, the radio quoted the official as saying. He said damage was estimated at 300 billion rials (\$171.4 million). The radio quoted him as saying that tons of food and thousands of tents and blankets were sent to the stricken areas, he said helicopters were unable to reach the worst-hit areas because of bad weather.

Earthquake hits northern Morocco

RABAT (AFP) — An earthquake at dawn Friday rocked the northern Moroccan region around the town of Fez, about 200 kilometres east of Rabat, residents and police reported. The geophysical observatory here stated that the quake registered 4.0 on the Richter scale, a magnitude capable of causing moderate damage in a populated area, but there were no immediate reports of casualties. Police and residents said the 5:33 a.m. (0533 GMT) temblor was also felt in the towns of Sefrou and Bahli, 28 kilometres east of Fez. Last May, an earthquake registering 5.8 on the Richter scale struck several regions in northeastern Morocco, killing three people according to an official toll and causing considerable damage. Morocco's worst earthquake levelled the southern town of Agadir in 1960, killing nearly 20,000 people.

Germany asks Britain to extradite Kurdish

BONN (AFP) — Germany has asked Britain to extradite a Kurdish separatist leader suspected of involvement in attacks on Turkish targets in Germany. Kani Yilmaz was arrested in London on Oct. 26. He is a member of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which has been banned in Germany since Nov. 26 of last year. Turkey has also requested his extradition for trial on charges which could carry the death penalty. German prosecutors are investigating whether Mr. Yilmaz was involved in a series of attacks on Turkish targets in Germany last year, including a hostage-taking at the Turkish consulate in Munich. A British court was to consider the German extradition request on Monday, the foreign ministry said.

Argentine spy seeks bombers in Lebanon

BUENOS AIRES (R) — A Top Argentine spy is in Lebanon hunting the perpetrators of the car-bomb attack on the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires in July which killed nearly 100 people. President Carlos Menem said on Thursday, Mr. Menem, speaking to reporters on his return from a visit to Syria, said he had sought help tracking down the bombers from President Hafez Al Assad. At this moment, as part of that collaboration, the number two of SIDE (Argentina's intelligence service) is in Lebanon, Mr. Menem said. Clarin newspaper named the spy as Rodrigo Toranzo, head of SIDE's foreign section, and said he had travelled with Syrian intelligence officers to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon to carry out investigations linked to the pro-Iranian Hizbollah. Argentina has still not found any of the perpetrators of the bombing which killed 96 people, but Mr. Menem has indicated that all the evidence points towards Iran.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Alice Au Pays Merveilles
17:30 Un Pour Tous
18:00 Reportage
18:30 Le Vent De Mousons
19:00 News in French
19:15 Grands Galops
19:30 Harry and the Hendersons
20:00 Doc "Innovation"
20:30 Quantum Leap
21:10 Murder She Wrote
22:40 News in English
23:30 Feature film: "Miles From Nowhere"
Major Dad

PRAYER TIMES

06:47 Fajr
06:04 (Sunrise) Duha
11:23 Dhuhur
14:13 Asr
16:37 Maghreb
17:58 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swetfiah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 612785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel: 622369

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiout International Church Tel. 655226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 641955
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise slightly with skies partly cloudy and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Agaha, skies will be partly cloudy, winds northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 5 / 15
Agaha 10 / 20
Djers 3 / 16
Jordan Valley 8 / 20

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 11, Agaha 20 Humidity
readings: Amman 93 per cent,
Agaha 50 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Youssef Abdo 694916
Dr. Bassim Qudus 694923
Dr. Youssef Faqih 654948
Dr. Juma'a Abu Dhiab 758448
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 773339
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairokh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Ya'qub pharmacy 644945
Shucisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Fayez Al Oadi 248743
Alquds pharmacy (-)
ZARQA:
Dr. Tariq Hijawi 985445

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 194
Civil Defence Emergency 194
Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630351
Hotel Complaints 628940
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 775121
Amman Municipality 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 636381
Company 653300
RJ Flight Information 08-53300
Queena Alia Ind. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Maternity Centre 813813/372
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 843362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 649131
University Hospital 845345
Al-Mushar Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahl, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/5
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 091983323
Zarqa National Hospital 091983323
Ibn Sina Hospital 091986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 091986990

IRBID:
Princess Banaa Hospital 021275555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02127275
Ibn Al-Nafes Hospital 021247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:45 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
09:15 Agaba (RJ)
09:25 Dhahran (RJ)
09:40 New Delhi (RJ)
09:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
10:25 Colombo (RJ)
15:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:55 London, Berlin (RJ)
16:50 Cairo (RJ)

17:55 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:29 Vienna (OS)
15:45 Rome, Larnaca (A2)
18:15 Dubai (EK)
19:00 Samaa (TV)
19:05 Larnaca (CY)
20:20 Beirut (ME)
21:55 Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:05 Athens (OA)
23:20 Amsterdam (KL)
23:40 Cairo (MS)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700 / 500
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 300 / 180
Carrot 300 / 180
Cauliflower 340 / 200
Clementine 300 / 200
Cucumber (large) 150 / 80
Cucumber (small) 240 / 220
Eggplant 320 / 200
Garlic 750 / 500
Grape Fruit 300 / 200
Lemon 320 / 180
Marrow (large) 160 / 80
Marrow (small) 340 / 200
Olive (green) 630 / 450
Onion (green) 300 / 300
Onion (dry) 420 / 300
Orange 620 / 500
Pepper (hot) 630 / 420
Pepper (sweet) 520 / 300
Potato 350 / 200
Spinach 320 / 200
Tomato 300 / 200
String beans 800 / 500



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Thursday reviews objectives of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development with visiting International Labour Organisation advisor Shukri Dajani (Petra photo)

Princess Basma puts illiteracy among most serious problems facing Arab women

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Friday said Arab women's problems are similar, noting that illiteracy ranks among the most serious.

In an interview with Egyptian Television, Princess Basma said organising women's efforts can enhance their role in the development process.

She voiced hope that Arab women will be able to play a larger role through the organisation of their efforts and defining their priorities.

Princess Basma stressed the importance of promoting awareness among women on their role and responsibilities.

She said men's realisation

of the important role of women will contribute to advancing women's status and enable them to play their part in the comprehensive development process.

Women's development can only be achieved through empowerment, and enhancing their confidence in their capabilities, the Princess added.

She praised the Egyptian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) role saying that they have contributed to the advancement of women's status in Egypt.

On Thursday Princess Basma reviewed with International Labour Organisation (ILO) Advisor Shukri Dajani the objectives and role of the

Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) in comprehensive development.

Princess Basma briefed him on the activities and programmes carried out by QAF's 45 centres, saying that these projects aim to improve social conditions of families in the rural and desert areas.

She also reviewed the work of the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September. Mr. Dajani praised Princess Basma's active role in social development and her continuous endeavours to develop women's status.

Cold front moves north; dams are filling up

AMMAN (J.T.) — The cold atmosphere depression which affected the Kingdom in the past two days has moved northeast into Syria towards Iraq, said the Department Meteorology Friday.

A department spokesman Friday said it will be partly cloudy Saturday with a slight chance of showers in the north, and temperatures rising slightly to 14°C or 15°C up from 13°C in the Amman area Friday, possibly dropping to 5°C at night.

Rains over the past two days have helped replenish the dams in the Jordan Valley region, according to Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Hashem Shboul. The King Talal Dam, the largest in Jordan, now holds nearly 34 million cubic metres (mcm) of water up

from 32 mcm on Wednesday; the Wadi Al Arab Dam holds 4.3 mcm and Sharhabil Dam holds 1.4 mcm, he said. Mr. Shboul added that the country's dams now hold more than 42 per cent of their total capacities of 100 mcm.

The recent rains, which were especially heavy in the north, reportedly damaged homes in the Irbid region. Civil Defence Department (CDD) sources said that four homes were at inundated by floods, adding that CDD teams were working in cooperation with the municipal councils in attending to the situation.

In Amman, the CDD was called out to help save residents of Al Hussein refugee camp where many homes were flooded.

Company plans \$2m in projects to help develop southern regions

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Investment Company for the Development of the Southern Regions Friday announced plans to carry out two development projects in the south each with a capital of JD 1 million.

Mazen Al Nasser the company's general manager, said that one project entails establishing an industrial complex that would be devoted to engine maintenance in the Karak Governorate. The other project, Mr. Nasser said, is a glass tool and container manufacturing endeavour at Ma'an near the glass factory.

"We have been in contact with a Chinese consultancy firm to advise us on the establishment of the glass tools factory near Ma'an, and the Chinese have displayed interest in helping us carry out the project and providing ex-

pertise, technical advice and training of Jordanian personnel in China," Mr. Nasser said.

The company, which groups the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), the Arab Potash Company (APC) and the Jordan Fertiliser Industry Company (JFIC), has already paid up 25 per cent of the overall capital of JD 1 million, and the door is open for the private sector to provide the rest of the capital, added Mr. Nasser.

Referring to the maintenance plant, added Mr. Nasser.

Referring to the maintenance plant Mr. Nasser said it would be set up at Ghor Safi in the Karak Governorate, adding that the feasibility studies conducted on its proved positive.

He said that the project

was one of the Jordanian schemes submitted to the Casablanca economic conference last month and several foreign firms expressed interest in providing help in this project.

The Jordanian Company for the Development of the South has paid up 25 per cent of the capital, and the local banks and other private organisations have been invited to take part Mr. Nasser said.

Together, the two projects are expected to create 184 jobs for people living in the southern regions of the country added Mr. Nasser who noted that work on the two schemes would start immediately after the full capital has been acquired.

The company was formed last year upon the directives of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Ministries to consider anti organised crime laws

AMMAN (J.T.) — Interior Minister Saleh Hamad Friday said the ministries of Interior and Justice will study prospects for introducing legislation aimed at combating organised crime.

Speaking upon his return to Amman from Naples, Italy, where he attended a three-day ministerial conference on cross-border and organised crime. Mr. Hamad said that although Jordan has no organised crime, the country is determined to take appropriate measures to deter crime of every kind and cope with the measures being undertaken at the international level to combat the work of criminals.

Noting that the Jordanian delegation had been active at the Naples conference, contributing to all its deliberations, the minister said that Jordan was keen on taking part in all world conferences where efforts are being pooled to fight crime.

The U.N.-sponsored conference, he said, was attended by representatives of 145 nations including 60 ministers, in addition to delegates from international and regional organisations.

The Naples conference, said Mr. Hamad, created two working committees, one



Minister Saleh Hamad

to deal with political aspects and the other practical means of combating crime. He urged nations to join forces in the fight against organised crime around the world and to exchange information to track down criminals.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said in an address to the conference that organised crime was a threat to democracy, and he urged governments to cooperate in defeating the growing menace of the world's organised crime syndicates.

Dr. Ghali cited the collapse of Communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, regional conflicts and social decay in countries of the Third World as developments which contributed to the mushrooming of organised crime.

Visiting UNIMED team to open regional centre

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter



Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan Thursday discusses preservation of archaeological sites with the head of the visiting University of the Mediterranean (UNIMED) team Franco Rizzi (Petra photo)

AMMAN — Representatives of the Rome-based University of the Mediterranean (UNIMED) who arrived in Amman on a several day visit to Jordan to explore expanding its activities in all areas of the Mediterranean, plan to open a regional centre at the University of Jordan to oversee activities in the Kingdom, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria, according to an official at the Italian embassy in Amman Friday.

The Italian envoy told the Jordan Times that UNIMED will open the centre at the university Saturday at a ceremony to be attended by university staff, and a UNIMED delegation led by Professor Franco Rizzi as well as representatives of UNIMED centres in France, Egypt and other countries.

The University of Jordan and Al al Bayt universities are members of the UNIMED group of 51 universities in the Mediterranean. UNIMED is sponsored and financed by the European Union (EU).

Professor Rizzi and the accompanying UNIMED delegation met Thursday University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh, Al al Bayt University President Adnan Al Bakhit and later with Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan to discuss collaboration in cultural, scientific and development areas and in the preservation of archaeological sites.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

New guide book to Jordan stands out among others

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A new guide to Jordan has hit bookstores in Amman, joining the dozens of publications that have appeared in recent months focussing on the Kingdom in keeping with increasing international interest in the region and in anticipation of a boom in tourism in the Kingdom.

It could be easily said that the 350-page Spectrum Guide to Jordan stands out among those publications since the very content and presentation of the book indicates a high level of professionalism, both in terms of editorial content and technical aspects.

The outstanding features of the book include a to-the-point presentation of Jordan's historical past, the political and economic course of modern Jordan and tourism attractions in the Kingdom.

A close reading of the book, rich with more than 200 excellently reproduced full colour photographs, supports the publisher's claim: "From Old Testament characters such as Solomon to the present peace-loving royal house of Jordan, this is a land where the dramatic echoes of history ring out loud and clear."

That in fact sets the central theme of the book. It does not offer a thorough scrutiny of Jordan's political and economic history, but then that does not appear to be the objective of the publisher. Instead, it provides an unambiguous summary of the

Kingdom on what could be described as a 'need-to-know' basis.

Close attention is paid to ensure that almost every question that any visitor, whether tourist, businessman, politician or passer-by, is likely to ask is satisfactorily answered. And for those who might want more detailed information, the book suggests where it could be found by listing a large collection of publications that have appeared over the years focussing on specific issues — ancient and modern history, economy, etc.

Of particular interest is the book's chronological review of Jordan in a nutshell. It provides a brief glimpse to the various periods that Jordan passed through starting with the paleolithic period (500,000 to 17,000 B.C.) through the Bronze Age, the Nabatean period and down to the Ottoman period, which ended at the turn of the century.

Those details, brief as they are (who would have known that Neanderthal man hunted around Azraq and in southern Jordan?), are enough background insight for any average tourist to assess and appreciate the various archaeological landmarks of the Kingdom.

As far as guides go, the detailed descriptions of every site of archaeological and tourism interest in Jordan are not available in that form and presentation as they are introduced and presented in the Spectrum Guide to Jordan.

It tells you how far every site is from Amman, Aqaba and Jerusalem (obviously with an eye on the joint tourism packages that Jordan and Israel are expected to offer), how to get there and what could be found there with the help of key photographs and maps.

The titles of the various sections are self-explanatory: history, geography and people (25 pages), places and travel (174 pages), special features (57 pages), business Jordan (four pages), facts at your fingertips (10 pages), and listings (telephone numbers and addresses of emergency services, hospitals, government ministries and departments, airlines, hotels, travel agents, diplomatic missions, cultural centres, and the media).

Published under the umbrella of Spectrum Guides, an organisation well-known for similar publications on many Third World countries in Asia and Africa, the guide's publisher is Mohammad Amin. Editorial staff include Tahir Shah supported by picture director Duncan Willets, international projects director Debbie Gaiger, editor Roger Barnard and associate editors Bob Smith and Jan Hemming.

Designed and produced by Camerapix Publishers International, Nairobi, Kenya, the guide was published by the Jordan Distribution Agency of Amman. It carries a list price of \$12.99 and is sold locally at JD 13.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT

- ★ Concert at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITION AND LECTURES

- ★ Lecture on German resistance of Nazi rule by Dr. Mohammad Abu Hantash at the Applied Sciences University at 1:00 a.m. Also showing an exhibition on the same subject.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Ceramics exhibition by Maher Samarra at Alia Art Gallery.

- ★ Ceramics exhibition by Najwa Annab at the Orfali Art Gallery.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by Sa'id Al 'Ani at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art. Also showing a paintings exhibition by Husni Abu Karim.
- ★ Exhibit entitled "Signs and Symbols: Communication and Interpretation from the Brandywine Workshop" at the American Center.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Ahmad Na'wash at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

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- Gardens St. : 696602 - Housing Bank 606130
- Abu Shakra Safeway Complex

Norwegian EU referendum set to go right down to the wire

OSLO (AFP) — Norway's 3.2 million voters will decide Monday whether or not to join the European Union (EU), and opinion polls indicate the vote may go right down to the wire as Norwegians battle with the threat of isolation versus a strong desire to retain sovereignty.

Although polls have indicated a majority opposes membership, a large group remains undecided just three days before the vote. But when pushed, the "don't know" generally lean towards a "yes" vote.

According to two polls Friday, between 48 and 46 per cent of voters are against membership, 38 to 39 per cent are in favour and between 14 and 15 per cent are undecided.

But a third poll showed that when those questioned were forced to take a stand either way, the result was a dead heat.

Membership supporters, who have slowly been making ground in recent weeks, are urging votes to say "yes" to ensure their security and to have a voice in international

decisions which will affect them regardless of membership.

Supporters, located mainly in urban areas, argue that independence today means isolation.

"Should Norway try to go it alone in a world that needs more cross-border cooperation than ever?" asks Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who submitted the country's membership application to the Commission in November 1992.

"We'll have a hand on the wheel and a foot on the brake" of the decisions made in Brussels, she says.

The "no" camp is calling for a rejection of membership because it would mean a loss of sovereignty to Brussels, an argument which hits home among the population in Norway's expansive north, primarily inhabited by fishermen and farmers. They feel even Oslo is already too far away.

Norway's farmers rely heavily on state subsidies due to the short season, and fear a sharp reduction if they join

the EU.

Observers say Norwegians, who previously rejected membership in a 1972 referendum, are reluctant to surrender their sovereignty because of the fact their country was controlled by Denmark and Sweden for 455 years until 1905.

Both of these links were termed "unions", and the world itself has acquired a negative connotation among Norwegians, according to one observer.

The date of the referendum was strategically scheduled so that the electorate would be encouraged to say "yes" after Nordic neighbours Finland and Sweden voted in favour on Oct. 16 and Nov. 13 respectively.

But the threat of isolation does not scare opponents, who know that Norway's rich natural resources — primarily petroleum and fish — ensure the country a strong economy regardless of EU membership.

Norway has the strongest economy of all the Nordic countries, registering a trade surplus in October of 6.14

billion kroner (\$917 million), not including maritime transport and oil platforms, representing an 11.2 per cent increase from October last year.

The emerging possibility of a victory for the "yes" side has prompted at least two political parties to threaten to block ratification of the vote if the vote is carried by a small majority, igniting a political crisis.

Voting will begin Sunday in some 200 northern, sparsely-populated communities, and continues across the entire country Monday.

The oil and gas industry, the lifeblood of the Norwegian economy, is strongly united in its belief that Norway must join the EU in order to ensure the country's security and welfare into the next century.

Norway's rich natural resources of oil, hydroelectricity and natural gas make the country one of the most prosperous in Europe and the most economically independent nation in the Nordic region.

Major may face leadership challenge

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major could face a challenge to his leadership of the Conservative Party over strongarm tactics used to sway a coming vote on the European Union budget, rebel Conservatives said Friday.

Even Mr. Major's opponents agree he is almost certain to win next Monday's vote in parliament after voting to call an election if the government were defeated.

But some Conservative "Euro-sceptics" are so aggrieved at being forced to toe the party line that they are threatening to mount a formal challenge to Mr. Major's leadership of the party.

"There's the likelihood that there will be a challenge now in the leadership," said Bill Walker, a rebel member of parliament.

The angry talk is a reflection of the ever-deepening divisions within the ruling party over Europe.

Mr. Major's government nearly fell in July 1993 over the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union.

This week's row, furious though it is, is probably just a warm-up for the convulsions that will shake the party when EU governments meet to review the Maastricht Treaty in 1996.

The big argument is 1996. "Euro-sceptic" MP Ian Duncan Smith said.

He said Mr. Major would pay a price by making Euro-rebels vote Monday to increase Britain's contributions to the EU budget.

"Of course it will leave an aftertaste. That's the nature of what's happened," he said.



John Major

Sitting on a slender majority of 14 in the 651-seat House of Commons, Mr. Major decided he had no choice but to make the vote an issue of confidence, especially as it will give effect to an international commitment he made to Britain's EU partners.

But Sir Nicholas Bonsor, defeated Thursday night for the chairmanship of the influential 1922 Committee of Conservative MPs, said Mr. Major's ultimatum had left MPs feeling that the parliamentary system had been "rather cavalierly handled."

"It would be a disastrous thing if the government got into the habit of using it when it was not necessary," he said.

For the bitterness to spill over into a challenge, 34 Conservative MPs — 10 per cent of the parliamentary party — would have to request a vote. They must do so by writing by next Wednesday to the man who beat Sir Nicholas, Sir Marcus Fox.

So far, however, Sir Marcus said he had not received a single letter. "I am quite certain someone would have said something when there's

only two or three days to go," he told BBC Radio.

Asked whether he thought there were 34 — or 30 or 20 — rebels ready to put their name to a challenge, Sir Marcus, an ally of Mr. Major's, replied: "You can even go down lower than that."

Mr. Major inherited the top job in British politics after a leadership challenge to Margaret Thatcher by arch-enemy Michael Heseltine triggered her downfall in 1990.

One name mentioned as a possible contender is former Finance Minister Norman Lamont, who has become a bitter critic of Mr. Major since being sacked last year.

Asked about Mr. Lamont's chances, Major loyalist Terry Dicks said: "Norman Dicks is more like it than Norman Lamont. He hasn't got a cat in hell's chance."

Mr. Dicks said Mr. Major should crack the whip over malcontents in his party who were hell-bent on bringing him down. "What the PM has to do is to kick their backsides and say we don't want you in our party," Mr. Dicks said.

1st east German restaurant gets Michelin star

DRESDEN, Germany (AFP) — For the first time, a restaurant in former east Germany outside Berlin has received a star in the prestigious Michelin Guide which judges culinary establishments around the world.

The Erholung, meaning "relaxation", in Dresden received the mark of distinction for the quality of cuisine by its 25-year old chef Mario Patis, the publishers of the book announced Thursday in Germany.

His traditional dishes, inspired by the Sachsen Royal Court, have been updated, using lighter ingredients to appeal to modern tastes, they said. The restaurant became rapidly popular after it opened in 1985, but its chef had to wait for the reunification of East and West Germany following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 before he could achieve his ambition of learning in the kitchens of western hotels and restaurants. A restaurant in the Berlin section of the guide received one star for the second year running.

Male infertility due to missing protein

TORONTO (R) — About half of all male infertility cases can be explained by the lack of a crucial protein in the sperm, a group of Canadian researchers announced.

The protein, dubbed P30H, is added to sperm as it travels through the epididymis tube, after being released from the testes, said Dr. Gilles Bleau, director of the Montreal, Quebec, group of scientists who made the discovery. In the absence of this protein, the sperm is unable to make contact and bind with a woman egg. "This is a very critical step in fertilisation," said Dr. Bleau. "A man who does not produce this protein, we believe is infertile." These findings should revolutionise the way sterility in males is diagnosed and treated, said Dr. Bleau.

Currently, doctors test for sterility in men by evaluating whether sperm is being produced in the semen. If it is normal-looking, and if it is motile. Using these criteria, doctors have been able to explain the causes of male infertility about 25 per cent of the time. About eight to 10 per cent of Canadian couples suffer from infertility, while men and women are equally responsible for the condition.

The study analysed semen from sperm donors kept in the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital in Montreal and two separate in-vitro fertilisation clinics. This protein has been known to exist in hamsters, and it is only in the last three years that researchers have tried to identify it in humans, said Dr. Bleau.

China to crack down on scientific fraud

BEIJING (AFP) — China's top scientific watchdog is to crack down on unscrupulous researchers who fabricate results to cheat consumers and obtain salary raises and promotion, a report said Friday.

Beginning next year, stricter controls will be imposed on the appraisal of scientific achievements in order to weed out fraudulent breakthroughs from genuine discoveries, Vice Minister of the State Science and Technology Commission (SSTC) Han Deqian said. Some 33,000 research cases are sent for appraisal every year, and the results are currently linked to promotion, salary raises, further financial support and prizes for the researchers involved. The appraisal results are also frequently quoted in advertisements for products. However, this system "has led to many cases of fraud and a decline in the quality of evaluations," Mr. Han was quoted as saying by the China Daily. Under the new measures, appraisals will only be carried out on research with technical applications listed in provincial or state science plans, thus cutting the caseload by some 50 per cent. Mr. Han said, stressing that the SSTC was unable to handle 33,000 cases a year. Evaluations will not be carried out on basic, theoretical and soft science research results, or common technical achievements developed by enterprises and institutions.

The new regulation will prevent firms using inaccurate assessments in their advertising to cheat consumers. Mr. Han said, adding that it would also encourage the development of new means — to examine technological achievements.

Helicopters attack Chechen capital

MOSCOW (AFP) — Some 40 helicopter gunships bearing Russian markings launched a fierce attack Friday on positions loyal to the pro-independence government around the Chechen capital Grozny, Interfax reported.

The unprecedented airborne assault, apparently by the Russian-backed opposition movement, killed three people and injured eight according to an initial count and also caused severe damage to Grozny's airport, Interfax said, quoting the Chechen High Command.

The Chechen military authorities told Interfax the Russian-made and marked Mi-24 and Mi-8 helicopters flew in from nearby bases in the Russian district of Stavropol and the Russian Republic of Northern Ossetia.

Both models can be armed with rockets and were widely used by Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence in Moscow "categorically" denied participation by Russian troops in the reported fighting in Chechnya.

The Provisional Council, the Russian-backed opposition group fighting Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, earlier announced an assault would be mounted Friday on Grozny from two opposition strongholds in the north and south.

The Council, which has made several helicopter attacks on government positions in recent days, said it would launch a two-pronged assault, using about 60 armoured vehicles, to seize the Caucasian republic's capital, Interfax reported.

Interfax quoted the Council, based in the northwestern Nadterechny district, as saying its forces have "undertaken more resolute steps towards the liberation of Grozny."

If confirmed, Friday's assault would constitute the biggest use of helicopters in the sporadic war and one of the biggest battles between the council and Dudayev.

Russia admits giving funds and training to the opposition, but denies Chechen government claims that Russian servicemen are taking part in the conflict.

Mr. Dudayev has been a thorn in Moscow's side since 1991 when he unilaterally declared his tiny republic of 1.2 million people independent from the Russian Federation.

The main opposition group, the Interim Council, announced on Aug. 2 its intention to overturn the Dudayev regime.

The president, a former Soviet Air Force general, claims the opposition are Russian puppets aiming to bring the republic back under Moscow's control. The

opposition says Mr. Dudayev has bankrupted the country and made it an international outcast.

The Dudayev government has offered a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the identity of the helicopter crews attacking government positions this week, Interfax reported. The offer was also extended to Stavropol and North Ossetia.

The Chechen government said earlier this month the opposition had been supplied with 32 Russian tanks, some with Russian crews, which Moscow denied.

The opposition, quoted by ITAR-TASS, confirmed it had received a major consignment of weapons, heavy artillery and aircraft but declined to say from whom.

On Sunday, government authorities said Chechen opposition forces had won control of the strategic village of Bratskoye in a bloody ground and air offensive.

Again, government authorities said that Russia had a hand in the fighting, claiming shots were fired over the border from north Ossetia, but again Moscow denied involvement.

The biggest battle of the conflict so far occurred on Oct. 19 when more than 160 people were killed after Mr. Dudayev launched an offensive against the opposition stronghold of Urus Martan.

Indonesia volcano death toll rises

JAKARTA (AFP) — The central Javanese city of Yogyakarta was bracing for a devastating flood of cold lava Friday after the eruption of the Merapi volcano killed more than 40 people and forced the evacuation of 5,000 others.

"We have imposed a 'full alert' condition on settlements along the Code River, which runs through the city," said Ani, acting spokeswoman for Yogyakarta municipality, which lies some 30 kilometres south of Merapi.

The 2,911-metre (9,600-foot)-high conical volcano, which dominates the densely-populated southern plain of Central Java, spewed out lava, ash and deadly heat clouds Tuesday that left a trail of death and destruction on its southern flanks.

"A total of 35 people, up to this morning, have died in hospitals here, while 46 others are still under treatment," Lieutenant-Colonel Suradadi of the Disaster Relief Coordination Centre in Yogyakarta said by telephone.

The head of the centre, Lieutenant-Colonel Sugiyanto, said that eight people were found dead in the area hardest-hit by the heat clouds, around the hamlet of Turgo, some six kilometres south of Merapi's crater.

Health Minister Suyudi told journalists here Thursday that he believed up to 200 people might still be trapped in the danger zones of the slopes of Merapi, where search-and-rescue teams could not yet enter.

But Col. Suradadi and Ms. Ani said that Mr. Suyudi's estimates were much too high.

Officials at Purwobinangun, one of the five evacuation centres in the Sleman Regency north of Yogyakarta, said Thursday that only eight members of the Turgo hamlet were still unaccounted for.

The centres are currently home to over 4,234 people evacuated from the danger zones. Windu Riyanto of the coordination centre said, adding that more than 1,000 others have already moved to their relatives' homes elsewhere.

Search-and-rescue teams have said that the whereabouts of six people believed to have been at a forest park in the mountain resort of Kaliurang near Turgo.

They also found an abandoned motorcycle with a number plate from outside the region and with two helmets on it at the base of the Boyong Gorge.

Ms. Ani, echoing volcanology authorities, said that the foremost threat to Yogyakarta, an ancient city of some one million people, was the accumulation of lava and other volcanic debris at the top of the Merapi.

"There is about 10 millions tonnes of sediment sitting on top of Merapi which could be flushed down by heavy rains, and may enter the city through the Code River," Ms. Ani said.

U.S. to cut Haiti troop strength to 6,000

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — The United States is to cut the number of its troops in Haiti by one third to 6,000 before the middle of December, U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry announced.

On a special holiday trip to share Thanksgiving lunch with American soldiers, Mr. Perry said the Americans would slash their troop strength from its present total of 9,557.

The move comes amid increasing pressure from Republicans in Congress to completely remove American soldiers from Haiti.

The White House had already promised that only 9,000 U.S. will remain in Haiti by Dec. 1, down from a high of 19,000 in the days immediately after the peaceful invasion to return ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The public message of troop withdrawals was accompanied in private by signals from Mr. Perry and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright that the United States would like to keep to its plans to pull out completely and hand over peacekeeping duties to a United Nations force.

"My visit here is a powerful symbol the U.S. is determined to see the U.N. take over to secure democracy in Haiti in the near future," Ms. Albright said.

One U.S. official said the two Americans told Mr. Aristide they could not solve all Haiti's problems and that the Haitian people had to get "used to not calling Uncle Sam when there is a problem."

After the meeting at the presidential palace, Mr. Aristide and Mr. Perry flew to the small central town of Hinche where some of the worst human rights abuses by the military regime that toppled Mr. Aristide occurred.

Ms. Albright flew by helicopter to the southern port of Jacmel where around 60 American soldiers are garrisoned in an old casino overlooking the bay.

She ate a traditional Turkey meal with Americans and a handful of international police monitors from New Zealand before giving away presents of popcorn, jelly beans and cigars. An American official said the cigars were not Cuban.

After being presented with

a special forces green beret, Ms. Albright praised the work of the troops and said Haitians were almost unanimously pleased at their presence.

"I think they'd kind of like us to stay forever but that is not our plan," Ms. Albright said.

In a bid to make the holiday appear as normal as possible, the military shipped in tons of turkey, ham, shrimp and pumpkin pie, as well as massive quantities of ham, potatoes, corn, gravy, beans and other trimmings.

Ms. Albright returned to the capital to see Haitian soldiers being trained in policing techniques — the programme is part of an effort to retrain the army — and had her photograph taken with several of the U.S. and foreign instructors.

Mr. Aristide, meanwhile, in the spirit of reconciliation he has espoused vociferously since his Oct. 15 return, invited two of his sharpest critics in the Senate, Bob Dole and Jesse Helms, to visit the Caribbean nation.

"They will be welcome here to hear the national anthem," a smiling Aristide said.

action like they have in the Middle East — military action," the youths' spokesman Domingos Sarmiento Alves told reporters at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport.

Portugal ruled East Timor until a few months before Indonesia invaded the territory in 1975 and is still recognised by the United Nations as the ruling authority there.

The demonstrators climbed the fence into the embassy compound on Nov. 12, during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum summit in Indonesia, to Jakarta's embassment.

The demonstrators accepted an offer of asylum from Portugal, fearing reprisals from the Indonesian authorities for their protest.

Exhausted but defiant after a 12-day embassy sit-in, the 29 East Timorese youths in Amsterdam Friday called on world governments to impose sanctions and take military action against Indonesia.

Waving victory signs and punching the air, the protesters passed through the Dutch capital on the way from the Jakarta U.S. embassy compound to Lisbon.

"We think European and U.S. governments should put pressure on Indonesia — first with economic sanctions, and then maybe they should take

29 East Timor exiles arrive in Portugal

LISBON (Agencies) — Twenty-nine East Timorese exiles arrived Friday in Portugal where they will benefit from political asylum following a 12-day protest sit-in at the U.S. embassy in Jakarta.

They were due to meet Portuguese Foreign Ministry officials, members of the Red Cross and officials who will help them settle in the country.

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Cambodia admits rights abuses by army

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia has admitted allegations by a U.N. human rights envoy that there have been human rights abuses by the army and the outlawed Khmer Rouge.

Sisowath Sirirath, Cambodia's representative to the United Nations admitted that there was a "great problem" with "banditry, kidnapping of innocent foreign and Cambodian citizens alike, extortion and physical threat and harassment committed by a small group of people who still abuse their power."

In a speech obtained by AFP, he added: "The Royal Government strongly condemns these barbarous acts and puts all of its efforts to investigate and pursue the matter in order to bring the culprits to justice."

Mr. Sisowath Sirirath delivered the speech Tuesday to the U.N. General Assembly in New York outlining the government's response to a

report on the human rights situation in Cambodia by U.N. special representative Michael Kirby.

The Cambodian representative said the government would continue "to fight to completely rid" the country of undesirable elements and provide a more secure environment.

The Khmer Rouge were primarily responsible for creating a climate of insecurity and carrying out what Mr. Kirby reported as the worst abuses and human rights violations. Mr. Sisowath Sirirath said.

Although Mr. Kirby said in his report to the U.N. General Assembly that reported crimes by the Khmer Rouge constituted "some of the worst abuses of human rights" in Cambodia, he also said elements within the armed forces were "implicated in a large number of human rights abuses throughout the country."

"Members of the armed forces in Cambodia continue to enjoy wide and effectively uncontrolled powers of arrest, detention and even execution," Mr. Kirby said.

"In many parts of the country, village communities, deprived of any recourse to civil protection, experience on a daily basis, the 'law of the gun'," he added.

Mr. Kirby said elements within the military had been behind death threats to judges, "the abduction and execution of villagers for extortion in secret detention facilities (and) the frequent summary execution of villagers who oppose or attempt to resist army abuses."

Mr. Sisowath Sirirath said Mr. Kirby's comments on the military and prisons had been accepted by the government and that "comments on individual breaches have been passed on to the relevant authorities for appropriate action."



AEROSMITH WINS MTV AWARD: The group during a gala organised by the music rock group Aerosmith poses with the Euro-channel MTV in front of Berlin's Brandenburg Music Award they received as best rock band (AFP photo)

Bihac fighting continues despite truce

SARAJEVO (R) — The commander of U.N. troops in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, announced a ceasefire between Serbs and Muslims in Bihac Friday but U.N. officials said fighting was still going on.

A reporter at government-controlled Bihac Television said explosions were still rocking the outskirts of the Muslim-held town after the truce was said to have come into effect.

"We can hear detonations, heavy artillery, tanks, howitzers and cannons. We haven't heard about a ceasefire. But from what we hear, we don't

believe it," reporter Safet Kurtovic told Reuters by telephone from the centre of the town.

Staff at the television station said they were moving into their shelters.

A U.N. military spokesman, Major Koos Sol, said there were few Muslim troops in the town Friday morning.

A U.N. relief aid worker who spent the morning in Bihac town said there was no direct shelling while she was there. The town centre was quiet but extremely tense with virtually no-one in the streets.

Monique Tuffelli of the

UNHCR told Reuters by telephone from the Coralic U.N. base inside the Bihac enclave that "we could hear heavy machinegun fire from the outskirts about one to two kilometres away but no mortars or shelling."

A senior U.N. official said in Sarajevo: "The ceasefire is not holding perfectly. It is a typical Bosnian ceasefire."

The U.N. uses the term "Bosnian ceasefire" to describe a truce which is agreed but also accompanied by shooting.

Gen. Rose earlier told reporters in Sarajevo: "There is no local ceasefire in effect in Bihac as of this morning."

A meeting Friday at Sarajevo Airport between Serb and Muslim representatives to discuss the truce and its possible wider application to the whole of Bosnia adjourned after an hour to enable the parties to consult their leaderships.

The airport meeting, chaired by Gen. Rose, was attended by Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the self-styled Bosnian Serb Republic.

United Nations military sources said Serb forces now occupied up to 20 per cent of the Bihac "safe area" and would face little resistance if

they wanted to take the town.

The sources said there were probably no more than 300 Muslim-led government troops defending Bihac, whose defences looked "fragile and vulnerable."

U.N. officials said there had been a drop in fighting on the Debeljaca-Hill overlooking Bihac town, where fog had cut visibility. But there was still heavy-calibre firing to the east and north-west of the town.

"There is still some heavy-calibre weapons fire on the Grabez Plateau, where they are fighting for the last bit of ground. There is also some heavier fire to the north-west," a U.N. official said.

Gen. Rose said Thursday, he doubted whether the Bihac defenders had enough strength left to repel the Serb forces if they were determined to take the town.

About 50,000 people are believed to be sheltering in Bihac, a U.N.-protected area which has been under attack from Bosnian and Croat Serbs for the past two weeks.

NATO backed away Thursday from endorsing a U.S. plan to save the Bosnian town over the question of who would provide ground forces to ensure its success.

After a day-long debate, the NATO council sent the plan, which would have ordered all fighters out of an enlarged safe area under threat of air strikes, back to the United Nations without even mentioning it by name.

A statement expressed the alliance's willingness to support continuing diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis and said merely it "would be ready to consider how to assist the U.N. in implementing these objectives



The commander of the U.N. forces in Bosnia, General Sir Michael Rose (left) looks at Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic as both hold a jointed press conference. Mr. Silajdzic said that he accepted the fact that the Bosnian government forces lost the battle for Bihac and that he wants to negotiate for a ceasefire (AFP photo)

once they had been agreed."

The statement fell far short of U.S. hopes that NATO would end a week of tough air strikes with a ringing endorsement of Washington's plan to save Bihac.

U.N. officials said the Serbs had detained 255 Canadian, French, Russian and Ukrainian peacekeepers. Bosnian government troops later prevented another 100 Canadians from evacuating their base.

Bosnian Serbs had threatened "all-out war" in retaliation for NATO air raids Monday and Wednesday which hit an airfield and destroyed radars and anti-aircraft missiles.

The Bosnian government army 5th Corps said Friday that heavy Serb shelling from occupied Croatia was driving people from surrounding villages into Bihac and "the roads to Bihac are filled with corpses."

The Bihac Press Agency in Zagreb quoted 5th Corps sources as saying the "fiercest attacks on Bihac are coming from the Croatian Serb side on Mount Pljesevica and from Debeljaca Hill (outside Bihac town)."

"Lots of people are fleeing Bosnian villages close to the border with Croatia and trying to reach the town. They are being shelled at from Pljesevica and the roads from there to Bihac are filled with corpses," the 5th Corps source said.

"Together with the refugees there are about 70,000 people in Bihac now," they added.

The United Nations could not immediately confirm the reports.

France said Friday the situation in Bihac was extremely grave and the West must react, but it stopped short of saying how.

French Foreign Ministry

spokesman Richard Duquesne told reporters: "The fall of Bihac would be a turning point and would have repercussions on the whole region."

Along with the UNPROFOR command, France considers that the situation cannot be left to deteriorate without reacting," he said.

The French spokesman said it was vital to achieve a ceasefire and noted that NATO's council had taken decisions aimed at halting the fighting, even though it failed to endorse a U.S. "stabilisation plan" for Bihac.

French officials said France, Britain and Spain, the three NATO allies with the most peacekeeping troops on the ground in Bosnia, felt it was unrealistic to adopt such a plan without any indication of what, if any, extra military means would be made available on the ground to enforce it.



A badly-injured man is rushed into a Sarajevo hospital after ten rocket-propelled grenades were fired from Bosnian-Serb positions into the city. One grenade hit the Holiday Inn Hotel, two exploded in the street, three hit a police station

lodged in the hotel, and four others exploded near the Brotherhood and Unity Bridge linking government-held areas with the Serb district of Grbavica. At least two people were wounded (AFP photo).

Delors ahead of Balladur in 2 polls

PARIS (AFP) — Socialist Jacques Delors would beat conservative French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur in the second round of presidential elections due next May, an opinion poll said Friday.

It was the second poll in a week to put Mr. Delors, outgoing president of the European Commission, ahead of Mr. Balladur if they were left to fight it out in a second-round run-off.

In the new poll by the IPSOS institute to be carried in the weekly Le Point Saturday, Mr. Delors would win by 51 per cent against 49 per cent for Mr. Balladur, reversing the findings of a similar poll a month ago.

If Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac was pitted against Mr. Delors, the gap would be much bigger with 59 per cent to the European Commission

chief and 41 per cent for Mr. Chirac. In last month's poll, 55 per cent were for Mr. Delors and 45 per cent for Mr. Chirac.

On Wednesday, a poll by the BVA institute put Mr. Delors ahead of Mr. Balladur for the first time in the run-off, giving the former 52 per cent of the vote against 48 per cent for the latter in the battle to succeed Socialist President Francois Mitterrand, compared to a 10-point lead for Mr. Balladur last month.

Previous polls had at best put Mr. Delors neck-and-neck with Mr. Balladur, whose centre-right coalition has been shaken by his rivalry with Mr. Chirac for the presidency and by a series of corruption scandals.

Wednesday's poll also said

that Mr. Delors would be victorious in a second-round run-off against Mr. Chirac, winning by 56 per cent to 44 per cent.

Meanwhile a third poll in the daily Parisien Friday by the CSA institute said Mr. Balladur would easily beat Mr. Chirac if U.S.-style presidential primaries were organised among conservative parties to choose a single candidate of the right.

The poll said Mr. Balladur would win 57 per cent of votes against 43 per cent for Mr. Chirac, mayor of Paris and leader of the Gaullist Rally For the Republic (RPR).

Mr. Chirac Wednesday vowed to stay in the race, regardless of opinion poll results. Primaries could be held between Jan. 15 and Feb. 15.

S. Korean opposition leader quits parliament

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korean opposition leader Lee Ki-Taek Friday announced he was resigning his parliamentary seat to devote all his time to push for the indictment of two former generals-turned-presidents.

The move was here as a last-ditch effort by Mr. Lee to rekindle disputes over a 1979 military rebellion and emerge from the shadow of Kim Dae-Jung, the retired opposition leader who is believed to be trying to make a comeback for the 1997 presidential election.

"The rebellion leaders must be brought to justice and be judged under the name of history," Mr. Lee said in a statement he read at a press conference.

"I am resigning my parliamentary seat... to press for their indictment," a determined Lee said.

He called for an early general election to form a new National Assembly, accusing the sitting 14th assembly of having failed to discharge its duty, especially in probing government corruption scandals.

He also pledged to launch a nationwide campaign to press for the cause, which will start with a weekend mass rally at the central city of Taejeon.

Mr. Lee, head of the country's largest opposition, the Democratic Party (DP), had led a dragging boycott of parliament over a prosecution decision last month not to indict the two former presidents, Chun Doo-Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo.

Mr. Chun became president in 1979 after leading the military rebellion, known here as 12-12 (Dec. 12) incident. Mr. Roh, who was involved in the coup, replaced Mr. Chun in 1987.

The prosecution last month found the two guilty of staging a rebellion, but said it would not indict them because of their past service to the development of the country.

Mr. Lee's resignation was later presented to National Assembly Speaker Hwang Nak-Ju, who said he would discuss it with the DLP and other party leaders.

But analysts here said Mr. Lee would not lose his seat pending the acceptance of his resignation.

There is little possibility that the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP), which has a comfortable majority in parliament, would vote to accept Mr. Lee's resignation, they said.

Most Italians do not think Berlusconi should quit

ROME (Agencies) — An opinion poll published Friday said 53 per cent of Italians did not think Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi should quit over a corruption probe but showed voters split on whether his shaky centre-right government should go.

The survey by the SWG research institute for L'Espresso magazine also indicated that if a new government had to be formed, a centre-left coalition was the preferred choice.

If a new centre-right coalition emerged, 24.4 per cent of respondents wanted anti-graft magistrate Antonio Di Pietro to lead it. Neo-Fascist National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini was the next choice on 21.8 per cent with Mr. Berlusconi far behind on 11.9 per cent, the magazine said.

It released the survey ahead of publication Saturday.

It said it was carried out among 800 Italians on Nov.

22, after support for Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party slumped in local elections and after Milan magistrates advised him he was under investigation for alleged corruption.

Mr. Berlusconi, who has denied wrongdoing and said he will not resign, is fighting to keep his explosive six-month-old coalition with the neo-fascist National Alliance and the federalist Northern League together.

The SWG survey said 53 per cent of the voters surveyed believed Mr. Berlusconi should stay in office despite the investigation against him, while 37.7 per cent thought he should resign.

On the coalition, 44.4 per cent thought it should resign while 45.8 per cent wanted it to continue in power.

Asked, however, what sort of government should be formed if the coalition could not carry on, 38.2 per cent said they supported a centre-left alliance of the League

with the opposition centrist Popular Party and the leftist Progressives.

L'Espresso said 30.1 per cent would support a renewal of the current coalition, while 14.4 per cent wanted a constitutional government. The rest were "don't knows."

Mr. Berlusconi Friday held talks with President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro on the political and social crises that threaten to topple his government.

Mr. Scalfaro qualified the talks as "normal and cordial."

But the daily Repubblica said Friday the president was at loggerheads with Mr. Berlusconi and planning to replace his rightist government with a government of national unity excluding the neo-fascist National Alliance and Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia, both members of the current coalition.

Mr. Scalfaro had cancelled a meeting with the premier Thursday, citing a busy schedule.

Mr. Berlusconi said the two men discussed the controversial 1995 budget, talks the premier held late Thursday with union leaders to head off a looming general strike and "the future of the ruling parties and of this government."

Mr. Berlusconi had announced Tuesday he would brief Mr. Scalfaro after he was served with a judicial notice putting him under investigation for alleged corruption as head of his Fininvest media-based empire.

"There is some kind of fever and we must all work together to lower it," he said, referring to the turmoil created by his political and legal woes.

Union leaders said Friday they would not cancel a general strike scheduled for Dec. 2 unless Mr. Berlusconi reconsidered cuts in pension spending that form part of a controversial series of austerity measures in the 1995 draft budget.

Portugal probes helicopter sale to Angola

LISBON (R) — The Portuguese government said Friday it was investigating a report that it delivered four helicopters to the Angolan government last year and serviced its Soviet-built warplanes, breaking an arms embargo.

"Some activities referred to by the weekly Independent newspaper were not known to the Defence Ministry," Defence Ministry spokesman Major Carlos

Chaves told a news conference.

"The ministry is seeking more information to clarify the situation," he added.

The Lisbon-based weekly Independente Friday said the General Office of Aeronautical Equipment (OGMA), an aircraft repair firm owned by the Portuguese Armed Forces, delivered the French-built Alouette III helicopters and a Swiss-built PC-7 trainer to

the Angolan government in 1993.

Independente said this violated an arms embargo on both the Angolan government and the rebel UNITA movement which Portugal, the mediator of a failed 1991 peace agreement in Angola, had undertaken to respect.

Mr. Chaves told TSP Radio that Portugal agreed to sell the aircraft to Angola in 1987, before the embargo came into effect.

Rwanda installs interim parliament

KIGALI (R) — Rwanda installed an interim parliament Friday with the enormous task of reconciling its two main ethnic groups, rebuilding its economy and ushering in democratic rule.

One by one the 70 members of the Transitional National Assembly stood, Bible in hand, and took an oath before hundreds of their countrymen in a Kigali stadium.

The pledged to work towards unity of their central African country, in which up to a million people died in massacres and civil war between April and July. Most of the victims were members of the minority Tutsi tribe killed by the majority Hutu.

"This is the first step towards democratic rule, towards unity of our country and you men and women must work to make that a reality," Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu told them.

The assembly consists of representatives nominated by eight political parties and the Tutsi-led rebel army that deposed the previous Hutu-dominated government and army in July.

been promised.

Head of state Pasteur Bizimungu presided over the swearing-in, accompanied by Vice-President and Defence Minister Paul Kagame.

Many Rwandans and outsiders believe the country can not know peace so long as nearly two million Hutu, including the troops and militiamen of the former government, are exiled in Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania.

The government says it wants to put on trial many of those in exile for their role in genocide after the assassination of military strongman and President Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6.

Diplomats said the assembly's most difficult task would be reviving an economy shattered by war and starved of foreign aid.

Western donors are holding back new aid and emergency credits until Rwanda reaches an agreement with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which seek repayment of \$9 million in arrears.

Five main political parties — the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front, Republican Democratic Movement, Social Democratic Party, Liberal

Party and Christian Democratic Party — have 11 representatives each in the interim parliament.

The military wing of the RPF, the Rwanda Patriotic Army, has six members representing its five brigades and the Gendarmier.

Three smaller parties — the Islamic Democratic Party, the Rwandese socialist Party and the Rwandese Democratic People's Union — have three assembly members each.

Rwanda has named a new foreign minister to replace the former minister who fled to Paris last month with up to \$187,000 in government cash, officials said.

They said the new minister appointed by Prime Minister Twagiramungu was Anastase Gasana from Mr. Twagiramungu's Republican Democratic Movement (MDR) party.

Mr. Gasana is a former ambassador to the United States and takes over from Jean-Marie Ndagimana, a Hutu, who fled to Paris saying he had fallen out with the government over reprisal killings and jailings of Hutus.

But government officials in Kigali say he was a common thief who stole money meant for Rwanda's New York mission.

Nepali monarchist parties rules out coalition

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepal's pro-monarchist potential political kingmakers ruled out the possibility of a coalition government Friday as a solution to general elections that left a hung parliament.

"We are not going to join any coalition with anybody," declared Rastriya Prajanta Party (RPP) spokesman Kamal Thapa.

He told reporters his party, which gained dramatically from four seats in 1991 elections — Nepal's first multi-party polls in three decades — to 20 this time, had not decided who should form the government.

The only contenders were the Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist Party (UML), which came out on top with 88 seats, and the outgoing ruling Nepali Congress.

Who that will be could depend on the RPP, and Mr. Thapa said its support would go to whoever offered the best deal.

"Who to support and on what condition would depend on receiving their proposals," Mr. Thapa said.

The only alternative to allowing the RPP to dictate the formation of a government in the Himalayan nation that ranks among the

world's 10 poorest would be for the two main parties to come to some arrangement between themselves.

The leaders of the UML and Congress joined hands in 1990 to drive a bloodstained campaign for multi-party democracy that succeeded in forcing King Birendra to yield many of his absolute powers and become a constitutional monarch.

They cooperated again in an interim government that led to general elections in the following year, the first since a palace coup ended a brief experiment with multi-party democracy 30 years earlier.

Congress President Krishna Prasad Bhattarai told reporters the UML wanted his party to support it from the opposition benches, but Congress was "very much hesitant to do that."

The UML, reversing its earlier insistence it would not consider a coalition, said it was now prepared to contemplate such a government.

"We have not closed our doors to a coalition, but it would be better to have a minority government of the UML supported by other parties in opposition," the UML spokesman Pradeep Nepal told reporters.

But he said Congress had no right to stake a claim to power, as Mr. Bhattarai did in a meeting with King Birendra Thursday night.

"It is not the parliamentary norm for Congress morally to stake a claim to form a government since it has been reduced from the majority," he said.

Austrian parties announce formation of government

VIENNA (R) — Austria's Social Democrat and conservative parties announced the formation of a new coalition government Friday nearly seven weeks after a general election dealt them their worst results since 1945.

Chancellor-designate Franz Vranitzky, leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPOE), said the coalition government would present its legislative programme to parliament next Wednesday.

"I am very pleased with the result and I am looking forward to a good term of government," Mr. Vranitzky said at a news conference, delayed by nearly two hours by what appeared to be last-minute negotiations.

Mr. Vranitzky was flanked by People's Party (OEVP) leader Erhard Busek who said the Austrian government

was confident of playing an active role in the European Union (EU).

Austrian voters backed (EU) membership by two to one in a referendum in June and the country is scheduled to join the bloc in January with Finland and Sweden. Norway votes on EU entry next Monday.

Both leaders stressed that the new government would work to reduce Austria's big budget deficit, and introduce a leaner, more efficient administration.

"There will be a clear improvement in the Austrian federal budget," Mr. Vranitzky said. "That is necessary because in past years the federal budget grew... in a way that cannot be permitted anymore."

Trade unions have warned that they are prepared to

fight any deep cuts in welfare payments.

Mr. Vranitzky provided no details on the budget cuts but reported that the two parties had agreed to cuts of at least 250 billion schillings (\$23 billion) within their four-year term of government.

The Finance Ministry has projected a 1995 budget shortfall of around 117 billion schillings (\$10.7 billion).

An Austrian top economic think tank warned last month that the country's budget deficit could soar next year unless action was taken because Vienna would also be weighed down as a net contributor to EU coffers.

Vienna is due to pay the EU around \$1 billion in its first year of membership.

Mr. Busek said the government had also to make a

serious effort to create a more efficient administration.

"We need modernisation, liberalisation for a more efficient state," he said.

To complete the formalities, Mr. Vranitzky will present his government to President Thomas Klestil after he returns from an official visit to Italy Saturday.

The Social Democrats and conservatives, who have governed Austria for most of the past 50 years, suffered their worst results in the Oct. 9 general election since 1945, but remained the two largest parties.

The far-right Freedom Party made the biggest gains in the national ballot. Leader Joerg Haider has branded the planned spending cuts as a blow to the people who can least afford it.

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Fairness on way to responsibility

WHEN AND how to conduct the Palestinian elections for the projected Palestinian National Council remains to be the principal bone of contention between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel. The mandate and scope of national responsibilities of the Palestinian Council also compound this dispute and appear to threaten the entire democratic process in the liberated Palestinian territories. Yet there is no effective way to settle the standoff between the PLO on the one hand and Hamas and Islamic Jihad on the other without conducting the elections as speedily as possible. Short of allowing the Palestinian constituencies to go to the ballot box and cast their votes according to their conscience, the opposition to the PNA would continue to seek grounds for claiming legitimacy as the representatives of the people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has been unduly dragging his feet on this issue and in the process appears to be undermining authority, stability and security in the areas subject to the PNA's rule.

We do not think the parties should split hairs on the fine points connected with the sought-after elections. Whether the membership of the Palestinian Council should be expanded to a hundred or so elected representatives or limited to a much smaller number, as Israel insists, is not the kind of issue that should continue to divide the two parties. Instead the overall aims and objectives of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks should determine these disputed subjects and put them in proper perspective. The sooner the Palestinians can exercise the right to vote the sooner legitimacy and the rule of law would reign supreme in the affected areas.

The holding of the elections, in fact, acquires an added sense of urgency since the truce attained between the PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat, and the leadership of the opposing Palestinian factions remains uneasy and ready to unravel at any time. The gap between the Palestinian groups supporting peace with Israel and those opposing it is simply too wide to be bridged by any temporary "ceasefire." Only free and democratic elections would settle the stalemate once and for all and Israel should not be or appear to be as the main stumbling block in the face of the elections process.

It is just possible that last Friday's bloody clash could be used to accelerate, rather than retard, not only the transfer of international funds to the PNA but also to put the elections issue on course. The funding objectives seem to be on track again after all parties sounded the alarm about the deteriorating situation in the Gaza Strip. Holding the Palestinian elections on time is still the unfinished business awaiting the two sides. The ball is in the Israeli government's court. Not playing fair with the Palestinian side at this juncture would be highly irresponsible.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MOHAMMAD SUBEIH, a columnist in Al Dustour, blamed the donor nations for many of the headaches facing Yasser Arafat in the self-rule areas of Palestine. Delay in providing the funds promised by the donor nations was aimed at rendering the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader unable to control matters, hence the violence which erupted in Gaza in the past week, said Subeih. It was indeed a conspiracy hatched by the Israeli authorities, and carried out in collaboration with the donor nations, that brought matters to a head in the self-rule areas, charged the writer. The conspiracy meant to weaken Mr. Arafat and strengthen Hamas which then would clash with the Palestine National Authority so that blood would be shed, he said. The writer said that Israel had sought to set one faction against the other and get them into infighting so that the Arab resistance in general would be weakened. With the death of as many Arabs as possible and the loss of faith in both Hamas and Arafat leadership, Israel hoped to continue to have the upper hand in all matters, added the writer. He said he expected the donor nations to speed up the aid now in order to strengthen Mr. Arafat's authority enabling him to crush Hamas once and for all.

TAREQ MASARWEH, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that despite the signing of the peace treaty, the Israeli TV commentators have never stopped digging up the past, instigating Jews against Arabs. The writer said that Jordan should carefully examine plans for amending laws to make them more in line with the peace treaty and wait and see if the other side complies with the treaty's provisions first. The Israelis recently presented a Palestinian security officer attacking Jordan and Syria, and this, said the writer, is a ploy to split the Arabs, something that violates the provisions of the peace treaty. Jordanian officials should follow up the programmes on Israel Television and see for themselves the continued racist instigations and incitement on the part of the Israeli authorities, demanded the writer.

JORDANIAN PERSPECTIVE

Inter-Palestinian violence in the cards from day one; peace lies in dialogue

THE FEELING just would not go away that the violence that the Gaza Strip saw on Nov. 17 was somehow expected; only the precise sites where the bloodbath would have taken place had remained unknown. And that feeling did not seem to stem from a conviction that the headline Islamist groups were bent upon precipitating violence in their campaign to wreck Palestinian autonomy. On the contrary, it was the behind-the-scenes seal of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) to prove itself and to live up to its image that it is the only game in town, that seemed to have fuelled the intuition that inter-Palestinian clashes were coming.

Well, all said and done, what we saw and heard about the violence bears out one thing — Yasser Arafat, president of the PNA and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), has taken the plunge, seeking to root out opposition to his peace agreement with Israel rather than trying a democratic approach to the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, or Islamic Jihad, which are challenging him into a bout of violence or prove their might in the Gaza Strip.

Notwithstanding any judgement of the course of action pursued by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, there cannot be any justification for the high-handed ruthlessness with which Mr. Arafat's policemen, supported by his Fatah militiamen, mowed down worshippers at the Palestine Mosque, triggering a day of pitched clashes between Hamas and Islamic Jihad supporters and security forces of the self-rule authority. As the day limped to a close, more than 12 people were killed and 200 wounded.

After all, the blood that was shed in the Gaza Strip was Palestinian, whether that of Hamas or Islamic Jihad members, Palestinian policemen or Fatah militiamen. And seeing Palestinian blood shed was not the hope that we in Jordan had, when we, despite our misgivings and reservations, pledged our support for the self-rule agreement signed by the PLO and Israel.

Apportioning blame for the violence on Mr. Arafat would seem the new name of the game for the sake of undermining him and his credibility — something that we Jordanians have been accused of. But then there is a string of circumstantial evidence, before and after the clashes, that points a finger at the PNA as the culprit. The headline groups might have offered the right atmosphere for such a course of events on that particular day, but it had somehow seemed that the bloodshed was coming. It was not spontaneous violence, but the culmination of a host of factors.

For one thing, it was clear that Mr. Arafat was getting more and more frustrated with increasing Israeli criticism and doubts that he was the right man to carry out his part of the autonomy bargain. Israeli President Ezer Weizman had openly expressed his doubt that whether "we have chosen the right man" on the Palestinian side to strike a deal, and

the hardline Israeli deputy defence minister, Mordechai Gur, was seen to be moving in a manner as if convinced that the Gaza-Jericho deal was on its way out.

In Israeli political terms, Mr. Weizman's criticism and Mr. Gur's moves might not mean much. But for Mr. Arafat they represented a slow but steady change in Israeli perceptions over the entire autonomy deal, and that was something he could ill-afford. Coupled with the fears of the PNA chairman was the pressure that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres applied on him to crack down on the headline opponents of the peace process, making an inter-Palestinian confrontation an inevitability; the sooner it happened the better.

Adding fuel to the fire was the indirect pressure applied on Mr. Arafat by the Americans, who impressed upon him the need to prove himself to be capable of not only handling the Palestinian scene but also dominating it through whatever means available to him. What happened in Gaza on Nov. 17 was only one manifestation of the means that Mr. Arafat thought were available to him.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's pointed comments that a "new Afghanistan" was in the making in the Gaza unless international donors came through with their pledges of financial support for the Palestinian self-rule authority, did not come out of a vacuum. It would be pressing the point too far to suggest that Mr. Arafat had informed Mr. Mubarak that he had ordered his policemen to open fire on worshippers in a mosque; but it is a very safe assumption that the Egyptian leader did have some inkling of the determination of the PNA to crack down on opponents of peace regardless of the gravity of the means used to do so.

Many Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip and elsewhere also seemed to have seen the clashes coming and sought to preempt it by openly declaring that their supporters were not seeking a confrontation with the PNA and that their fight was against the Israeli occupation. Indeed, some channels of communication were already open, and quite a few moderate leaders of Hamas had already come around to seeing that violence was not serving their movement's cause and that they would be in a better position to express their rejection of the peace process through democratic means.

By and large, the demonstration that was supposed to have taken place after Friday prayers at the Palestine Mosque was one of the democratic means that the moderates thought would serve their purpose.

Indeed, that is not passing judgement on Hamas, Islamic Jihad or the PNA. All of them do share the responsibility for the clashes, but Mr. Arafat takes the lion's share. What he showed the outside world is that he is not much different from many other Arab and Third World leaders who would use everything in their means to ensure their own survival

against all odds.

Again, that is not to absolve Israel of its responsibility or the international community of its failure to deliver its pledges. Let us not forget that many of those gathered at the Palestine Mosque were Palestinians who were denied entry to Israel and thus denied a means to make a living and feed their families as a result of the restrictions that the Israelis imposed against Gaza labourers entering the Jewish state. Frustration and anger against the denial of food for their families was the dominant feeling among them rather than any determination to challenge the autonomy accord.

The "footdragging" — as it is often described — of the World Bank, which is coordinating international aid for the Palestinians, also bears a share of responsibility to have instilled the frustration and anger. But then, the international experts who insisted on designating the World Bank as the coordinator for aid to the PNA very clearly overlooked one fundamental factor — the World Bank has never assumed the role of a relief agency and emergency aid channel. On the contrary, the international institution is known for its methodical approach to development through clearly determined parameters and procedures and it is only living up to its mandate within that framework when it insists on accountability and transparency. The World Bank cannot be expected, now or any time in the future, to come into the Gaza Strip with a fat purse and deliver cash to the Palestinians unless its mandate is changed — a highly unlikely prospect at that.

Meanwhile, tension is continuing to build up in the Palestinian territories. The violence has brought into question the very concept of expanding Palestinian self-rule to the rest of the West Bank under the Sept. 13, 1993, declaration of principles. Those Palestinians in the West Bank who were pinning hopes on the PNA assuming control of their lives, which would also mean a life away from terror and state oppression, are having second thoughts today and it remains to be seen what welcome they will extend to the PNA as and when it reaches them.

One thing is abundantly clear: Mr. Arafat and the people around him, now trying to show off their muscles in the Gaza Strip and Jericho as well as other parts of the West Bank, should realise that might is not the answer to fight their own brothers. They have to adapt themselves to a completely new level of thinking, that dialogue is the sole means to address differences. It was highly unlikely that any of the Hamas members who attended the Friday prayers at the Palestine Mosque on Nov. 17, was under orders to open fire on Palestinian policemen. They would never have been the ones to provoke a clash, given the very clear thinking of their leaders that inter-Palestinian violence could only lead to setbacks for the opponents of peace process.

The Week in Print

Conflict in Gaza blamed on Israel, donors, delayed elections

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE LOCAL press in the past week gave coverage to the sad events in Gaza, the developments in the peace process and the domestic affairs.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, blamed the Israeli government for the clashes between Hamas and the Palestine authority in Gaza, noting that the Israelis have been placing one obstacle after another in the path of this authority, making it impossible for President Yasser Arafat to control the situation.

The writer said that delaying the elections, obstructing the supply of funds from the donor nations and restricting Mr. Arafat's rule to very limited areas have all contributed to the eruption of violence.

Describing what happened in Gaza as a tragic, Sultan Al Hattab, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the killing of Palestinians who had fought hard for freedom and independence was a real waste which can benefit Israel and the Jewish settlers.

The opposition has all the right to express their position through democratic means but no one has the right to resort to the use of arms to silence the other groups, said the writer. He said Israel and Hamas are wrong if they believe that by exercising pressure on the Palestine National Authority they would attain their goals.

Israel alone is to be held responsible for the violence in the Gaza Strip, which is taking its toll among Arabs and Israelis alike, said Ahmad Misseh, a columnist in Al Ra'i.

He said that by refusing to allow the Palestinians to hold elections, by perpetuating the presence of settlers amidst Arab centres and by blocking aid to the Palestine National Authority, Israel is obviously aiming at escalating the violence which can by no means serve its own purpose.

Arafat Hijazi, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, blamed the Palestine National Authority for succumbing to pressure from the Americans and the

Israelis and eventually using arms against the Muslim demonstrators in Gaza.

U.S. President Bill Clinton, in his address to Jordan's Parliament, and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in an address in Canada recently, gave clear signals that only when the Palestine National Authority crushes Hamas will the world community ensure the flow of economic aid to the Palestinians, said Hijazi.

He said that President Arafat should have told the Zionists that his troops will never kill Palestinians and that resistance is the right of the oppressed people everywhere.

Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, defended the Palestinian troops' resort to the use of fire by saying that the soldiers were exposed to death by the stones which were raining down on them and had to fight in self-defence.

The writer said that since the Palestine National Authority is a national government and a national entity, any attack on it is treason that should not be condoned by any party.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the events in Gaza could well undermine the Israeli-Palestinian agreements concluded in Oslo and Cairo, to end the violence. The Palestinians ought to open a dialogue to reach a settlement for their disputes, but the Israelis should remove the Jewish settlements which have been causing tension in the region, said Rimawi.

Once the two factions in Gaza have found that the Israelis are abiding by the Oslo agreement and pulling out from the Arab areas, they are certain to calm down and resort to dialogue and peaceful means in settling differences, added the writer.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that Israel had triggered the violence in Gaza to force the local residents to leave their homes. According to the writer, thousands of Gazans have arrived in the East Bank in the wake of the Gaza vio-

lence, escaping from the deteriorating economic conditions and in a bid to save their lives.

He said that the Gaza massacre is being exploited by Israel in order to pursue its so-called transfer policy of evicting the Arabs from their homeland.

Should the events recur and more blood be shed, the Israelis would make further gains and ensure the death of more Arabs who had been rebelling for their freedom, said the writer.

After every resistance activity in the occupied Palestinian lands the Israelis threaten to stop the negotiations with the Palestinians and abrogate the Oslo deal, said Mohammad Kawash. The writer in Al Dustour said that the Israeli government doesn't seem interested in pursuing plans for pulling Israeli forces from Arab land and is therefore continuing to consolidate its presence and the presence of the Jewish settlements.

The writer said that delay in holding the elections in the self-rule areas, the closure of the West Bank and Gaza after every resistance act and blocking of aid to the Palestinians stand out as evidence of Israel's insincerity about peace.

Taher Al Adwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, expressed hope that the new Jordan-Gulf relations would help end the sanctions on the Iraqi people.

The writer said that Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali has no doubt achieved success in restoring warm relations with Qatar and the Gulf states and the time has come for the Arab World to embark on reconciliation, transcending the negative aspects of the Gulf crisis and ending the embargo that has been starving their brothers in Iraq.

Dwelling on the same theme, Ahmad Dabbas, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab, said that Dr. Majali's visit to Qatar has opened a new chapter of fruitful cooperation between Jordan and the Gulf states. The new peace era requires new and positive development in inter-Arab relations and requires solidarity, and end of

differences, stressed the writer.

Mohammad Subeih, a columnist in Al Dustour, criticised the government for foiling an attempt on the part of political groups in Jordan trying to hold a rally to express their opposition to the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

The writer said that in Israel there are political groups which oppose the same treaty and they have been allowed to air their views freely, without any ban like that imposed by the Amman governor on the meeting that was to have been held at the Professional Association Complex in Amman. There could have been no harm in holding this meeting, especially as the treaty has been ratified by the Parliament, said the writer.

Ahmad Dabbas, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab, said that the merchants and store owners are adamant and refuse to reduce the price of their commodities despite the government's announcement of the cuts in tariffs on customs duty.

The writer said that when the prices rise, the merchants automatically hike the prices of items found in their stores, but now that the government announced a reduction in prices went down. The writer said these actions, characterised by greed and manipulation, should be met with firm action on the part of the government.

Mohammad Daoud, a writer in Al Dustour, said that there is need for the government to keep insisting on family plans and birth-planning programmes in view of the excessive population growth in Jordan and the decline in the food production.

The government ought to execute nationwide programmes to spread awareness among the public about the dangers inherent in huge population growth which has a grave consequences on the country, causing poverty and unemployment among other ills. He said that birth spacing is not only good for the national economy but also beneficial for the mothers' health.

Aid agencies divided over force for Rwandan camps

By Buchizya Mseteka

Reuter

GOMA, Zaire — Aid agencies in eastern Zaire say they are divided over proposals to send a U.N. force to police Rwandan refugee camps and wrest control from militia thugs.

Aid workers from 16 international agencies demanded the force and said they hoped it would have a strong mandate and heavy firepower to break a reign of terror and allow aid to be distributed to hundreds of thousands of Rwandans in the camps.

But others disagreed and told Reuters the force would only fuel tension in the volatile camps and could endanger the whole humanitarian aid operation and the lives of innocent refugees.

There are up to 90 aid agencies in eastern Zaire. The 16 agencies which demanded the force have threatened to pull out, among them six national branches of Care, three wings of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF-doctors without borders) and Oxfam.

"There is an urgent need to improve security in the camps, the need to ensure that food reach the right people and that is why we need a force here to ensure that is carried out," said Joel Boutrouse, head of the U.N. Refugee Agency in Goma town.

"We need a credible force here, credible in terms of numbers and credible in terms of mandate. I surely do not agree with those opposed to the force."

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has recommended sending in 3,000 to 5,000 troops to secure the Zaire camps where refugees are at the mercy of armed followers of Rwanda's ousted government.

He told the Security Council this would be more realistic than a 10,000-to-12,000-member enforcement operation to separate followers of the former regime from the other refugees.

Aid workers who backed the idea said the force would need a sweeping mandate and heavy firepower to ensure law and order and would require financial and material backing from rich western nations.

The workers, already burdened by the dilemma of feeding thousands of killers, said they were increasingly disgusted that the current insecurity was actually shoring up the power of Hutu leaders

who masterminded and carried out the genocide of up to one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus between April and July.

"It will be pointless to have the force if it will not be backed by an aggressive mandate under the U.N.'s Chapter Seven," said an aid worker.

"We need a force that will go into the camps and restore order, a force which by its sheer presence should be strong enough to intimidate the militia and intervene forcefully if there is a crisis in the camps," another aid worker added.

But workers from some of the more than 70 other agencies which did not publicly demand the force three weeks ago said sending in troops was doomed to fail and called for talks instead.

Although they agree that power in camps is held by militias and their chiefs, a collection of Hutu mayors and regional party bosses of the ousted government which fled into exile in July, they said only dialogue with refugees could solve the problem.

They warned that the warrens of blue plastic tents on a plain between volcanoes and Lake Kivu are awash with guns, brought into Zaire by thousands of defeated Rwandan soldiers and militiamen. They said any U.N. force would have to be prepared to be dragged into battles and would inevitably take casualties.

The Hutu authorities have murdered camp inmates, skimmed off food aid meant for vulnerable civilians and prevented refugees from going home to Rwanda, where the victorious, mainly Tutsi Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) has sent up a new government.

"An international military force will only be recipe for disaster. It will need to disarm these people and that could well turn out into some nasty business," one worker said.

"Where will they start from?" another said. "Who will they target? Most killings in the camps take place under cover of darkness and they will find few people willing to volunteer information."

Those opposed say only talks should be used to remove guns and spread security for a proper registration of refugees for humanitarian purposes free of intimidation from the Hutu power group.

Deregulation of air transport business is key to industry's future

By Ali Ghandour

The following is an article based on a presentation made Nov. 23 by the writer at a seminar on structural impediments faced by civil aviation worldwide. The seminar was held before a conference on International Air Transport regulations, under the auspices of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in Montreal, on the same day. Mr. Ghandour was Royal Jordanian chairman and chief executive officer until 1989. He is currently His Majesty King Hussein's advisor on civil aviation and tourism and a member of the secretariat study Group of Experts on Future Regulations Arrangements for International Air Transport (GEFTA).

THE WINDS of change that swept the airline industry in recent years were indeed gusty. Change was neither gradual nor incremental, but was forced on the world community by U.S. deregulation action. The U.S. was in a hurry and could not wait, deeply embedded in principles of laissez-faire. The U.S. felt cocksure of itself because of a built-in self-adjusting mechanism in its economy that allowed and promoted free entry and free exit, and therefore the well-being, and for that matter, the fate of any one particular airline was not of any primary concern. Western Europe took time to absorb the shock, and reluctantly responded — and adapted — to change. In retrospect, the European Community's resistance to change was misguided, bearing in mind the fact that the Treaty of Rome all along provided for increased competitiveness in the realm of civil aviation that was belatedly exercised.

Today, the European Union on the one hand and the U.S. on the other, are two

giants sharing a common denominator and subscribing to principles of free enterprise. They have set the pace, yet there are more chapters to unfold. The contagion is spreading. Asian and Latin American nations have already formed their own groups and are reacting positively. It is not without significance that the prime minister of Thailand, Mr. Chuan Leekpai, in opening last September the 26th meeting of economic ministers of the Association of South-east Asian Nations, said: "A united ASEAN will be in a better position to face both the challenges and opportunities of our age than its individual member countries striving on their own." The swing and orientation towards free market forces are gaining the upper hand since trade and investment are increasingly being viewed as the twin engine of development and growth.

In the Third World, except for the newly industrialised countries, the situation looks somewhat different and

perhaps less reassuring. Historically, these countries whose leaders were imbued with socialist ideals at the hands of Harold Laski et al at the London School of Economics and similar, renowned institutions in the aftermath of World War II, were bent towards command economies or quasi-planned regimes. This, of course, invoked elements of protection. The national carrier, the symbol of statehood and nationalism, was singled out for preferential treatment. With the wisdom of hindsight, these actions could now be viewed as having retarded rather than accelerated economic growth of which tourism has been and still is, a significant arm. However, it is only fair to postulate that context is vital in judging history.

In Third World countries, the airline today is not anymore the sacrosanct institution it once was to be maintained at all costs. Nowadays, there are more overpowering considerations and imperatives to reckon with. Unemployment, poverty and disease, let alone intercommunal fighting amongst many nations, combine together to debilitate the national economy.

As a corollary, and helped by the demise of communism, politically, socially and economically, Third World countries open up on the Western world and look forward to the promises of free enterprise. In the realm of civil air transport, they do so with some reservations and a

feeling of trepidation. They fear becoming exposed to the ravages of the forces of the marketplace without being able to influence the course of events. These fears, while deeply (and understandably) rooted in the past, need not prevail today and can be allayed with relative ease. Mistrust, once overcome, gives way to self-confidence and hope.

ICAO, it is heartening to note, is not an organisation for one particular segment of the world population, but an instrument of international cooperation capable of providing a modus vivendi that can elicit consensus if not, hopefully, unanimity. The new regulatory arrangements that are being proposed by ICAO are ICAO's attempt towards the reform of the world's air transport market regime.

While I readily accept the definition of structural impediments propounded by GEFTA, I would go one step further to suggest that, in my view, structural impediments amount to institutionalised constraints that are seen to provide the practicing state vis-a-vis its opposite number a competitive edge. Since state aid/subsidies, and for that matter, full or partial state ownership of an airline, do not of themselves and by themselves invariably and necessarily constitute structural impediments to increased competitiveness, no inference can be readily and objectively drawn whether state aid/subsidies are good

or bad, beneficial or detrimental. The issue is a tendentious one, and there is plenty of room to equivocate. In the final analysis, situations will have to be considered strictly on their own merits, as to whether or not they distort trade in international civil air transport. Those states which are fearful that the push for removal of impediments could be inimical to their own interests could take comfort in the Chicago Convention in which principles of sovereignty and reciprocity are deeply enshrined.

In historical perspective, and if I may draw on the experience of Jordan with which I am very familiar, structural impediments were seen not as a modality of providing a competitive edge, but as means of providing a counter-balance to the relative might of its opposite number. For example, Jordan in its bilateral agreement with the United Kingdom had, with a great sense of resignation, to put up with the limitations on frequency, capacity and aircraft-type that the British at the time imposed. In this context, the preferential treatment that Jordan accorded its national carrier could not be seen as providing a competitive advantage that is unfair but as an attempt to partly compensate for the economic nonsense of a commercial agreement, paradoxically, freely negotiated and agreed to. How else a small country like Jordan could have reacted? I dare say that Jordan

dan's experience in this regard was not at all unique.

Hence, and again in historical perspective, structural impediments could be seen as peculiar to Third World countries suffering from rigid and bureaucratic regimes. The situation is somewhat different today as developing nations' airlines are encouraged, in a changing world, to adapt to change with minimal distortion or dislocation. In today's world, aviation is increasingly being viewed, economically, as a component of one whole and not a separate entity to be protected or defended at all costs. In my view, Third World countries can look forward to becoming full partners in this new challenging endeavour by becoming more productive and efficient in order to reap the benefits of new opportunities that the new environment provides, which they felt they had always been denied. I wish to remind you that structural impediments whether in bilateral agreements or elsewhere militated against Third World countries because of the obvious imbalance in relative strength. And for this reason, civil air transport in the Third World did not develop to its potential. Notwithstanding any lingering doubts, Third World countries have much to gain from participation because the overall benefits that will accrue from tourism and ancillary services are neither confined to, nor contingent upon, the operation of a national airline. In any event,

those states which fear the removal of structural impediments could seek refuge in the clauses pertaining to safeguards and safety nets that are being proposed.

In the developed countries structural impediments such as state aid/subsidies must and will go. Within the European Union the machinery is there to deal with them, although policies come into play to temper economic sense. It is not surprising that in an article in the International Herald Tribune of Sept. 5 this year entitled, "Good Money After Bad?" Conrad de Aenle, in discussing the French and Greek governments' aid to their state airlines that the European Commission has allowed, goes on to say "many believe the aid will buy European carriers time, but not much else." Pressure is building up within and outside the European Union. Sir Colin Marshall, chairman of British Airways, is said to have stated that the European Commission's action was "a serious setback for the development of a genuine free market in air transport." Similarly, the U.S. Transportation Secretary, Federico Pena, is said to have stated that "access by state enterprises to money of this sort is flatly unfair to competing, private airlines, which cannot draw from the coffers of government." Notwithstanding these actions and reservations, I believe that both the EU and the U.S. are not set on a collision but com-

plementary course.

On the other hand, "slot allocation" is a serious issue that has belatedly come to the forefront. It is deemed as a structural impediment, complex and intricate, that cannot be dealt with overnight. It stands at the core of the infrastructure of commercial aviation, necessitating vision, forward planning and huge investments in airport building and expansion. However, until such time a solution is devised to cope with the present situation, the concerned organisations should innovate measures for a fair allocation of slots. For the time being, International Air Transport Association (IATA's) procedures currently in force seem to be working, but are hampered by the physical limitations that cannot be overcome except by airport expansion and improvement to cater for present needs and future growth.

On a final note, and in spite of the misgivings which we entertain from time to time, a bright future awaits civil air transport as a whole. We need to cast our prejudices, overcome the barriers of ignorance, and join hands together so that we may climb to even greater heights. We do set ourselves great goals as we invariably do, but they are certainly within attainable horizons. We are spirited men and women; we have always been. And today we have a chance to build our heritage for tomorrow.

Jordan asks for clear EU stand

(Continued from page 1)

Belgium next week by key players in the Middle East, including Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

"The focus on Brussels (for the Middle East) is intense and comprehensive," Prince Hassan said, adding that his trip to Brussels was Jordan's first high-level visit after it signed a peace treaty with Israel on Oct. 26.

There has been some opposition to the accord. The Crown Prince said the Jordanian government would tolerate verbal criticism, but violence could not be condoned.

Prince Hassan praised the opposition and described it as national, committed and constitutionally-bound.

He said Jordan had always been against violence and extremism.

He called on Arab media to demonstrate better understanding of Islam and to avoid mixing between Islam and extremism and to avoid issuing judgements based on past positions.

On the issue of Jerusalem, Prince Hassan said sovereignty on the Holy City should be an Arab one. However, he said, Jordan will continue to shoulder its religious mandate towards the holy places to prevent the "creation of a state of vacuum."

Prince Hassan also urged Arab countries to reconsider

their relations and called for pooling Arab efforts to deal with the new reality in the Middle East.

He said progress achieved in the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks of negotiations would be very important to achieving peace in the region in view of Syria's importance in the peace process.

Prince Hassan said the peoples of the Middle East should plan the future of their region and should not only implement foreign initiatives.

Any Middle Eastern order should include Iran and Iraq, he said.

He said the Iraqi people should no more be punished by the international community, especially if Iraq implements United Nations resolutions.

He also reviewed Europe's role and the Jordanian-European relations, stressing the need for the Amman economic conference next year to be a main element in these relations.

The Mediterranean region, he said, should continue to build contacts between the European and Arab civilisations on the basis of common understanding and should look for ways to enhance cultural dialogue between faiths and peoples.

Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath later left Brussels for Luxembourg.

Prince Hassan met Thurs-

day evening at the EU headquarters with EU President Jacques Delors, who hailed Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and opening new scopes of cooperation between Jordan and the Arab countries on the one hand and Europe on the other.

Prince Hassan discussed with Mr. Delors Jordanian-European relations and prospects for enhancing Europe's role in the Middle East.

Discussion at the meeting, which was attended by the delegation accompanying Prince Hassan and senior EU officials, also focussed on prospects for developing the region after the peace process and issued raised between the Crown Prince and Mr. Delors at the Casablanca economic summit.

The talks also centred on the economic summit which will be hosted by Jordan in the first half of 1995 and Jordan's vision of partnership between Europe and the Middle East.

Mr. Delors stressed the EU's determination to offer special programmes to develop the Middle East and to actively participate in projects in the region.

Also on Thursday, Prince Hassan met with the EU's vice-president for foreign relations with the countries of the Mediterranean region, the Far East, the Middle East and Latin America, Manuel Martin.

Prince Hassan outlined at the meeting Jordan's views of

the concept of developing the Middle East after the peace process.

Mr. Martin voiced the EU's appreciation of Jordan's role in the peace process and lauded the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and His Majesty King Hussein's efforts in this regard.

He also stressed the EU's support for Jordan and its keenness to promote cooperation in economic, political and cultural fields.

The Crown Prince answered questions by EU officials present at the meeting on prospects for European investments in Jordan and the Middle East opening new scopes of cooperation between Europe and the region.

Prince Hassan, who was the guest of honour at a breakfast hosted Friday by senior EU official Hans van der Broek, met with the Belgian foreign minister on Thursday for talks on bilateral relations and cooperation between Jordan and the EU.

Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath were also the guests of honour at a lunch hosted by Belgium's King Albert II and Queen Paola.

Prince Hassan was accompanied on his visit to Belgium by a delegation comprising Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf, Minister of Planning Hisham Al Khalib, the Crown Prince's advisors and the Jordanian ambassador in Brussels.

Jordanian team goes to Iraq

(Continued from page 12)

goods involved floating in the middlemen's market also dissuaded many genuine Jordanian businessmen who sought to do business, market sources say.

"If one were to make a calculation at any given point in time, he would have come up with staggering figures — millions of tonnes of sugar, rice and wheat and hundreds of thousands of tonnes of other items," said a Jordanian who specialises in brokering commodities.

The reality, according to the broker, was that every inquiry originating in Iraq grew ten- or 20-fold by the time it reached the market through self-assumed middlemen and agents who claimed to have "well-placed" contacts with "well-placed" people in Baghdad.

But as people followed up the inquiries and provided offers, it slowly dawned that most of the middlemen were among the hundreds if not thousands who were circulating such inquiries, with no one knowing with any accuracy who was the actual buyer.

"Many Jordanians travelled to Iraq to find out what was actually going on, but came back none the wiser," said the banking executive. "They simply gave up, and told inquiries they were not interested in doing business with Iraq."

The see-sawing Iraqi dinar and the Baghdad government's move last year to withdraw part of the pre-crisis currency were also other factors that discouraged many Jordanian businessmen from pursuing trade with Iraq, traders say.

The situation was largely limited to middlemen and agents since Jordanian manufacturers of many consumer items and medicines continued to do business with Iraq.

Now that indications are that an end-easing of the sanctions could be only six months away, Jordanian businessmen are trying to get a clearer picture of what is going on in Iraq and what the business climate is like, and hence the visit that begins today.

Col. Maqdash accused Arafat loyalists of bringing in to 'Ain Al Hilweh 100 to 150 extra fighters from outside the camp.

For the loyalists to maintain their presence in the camp, they would have to punish the initiators of Friday's clashes, he said.

"An investigation will be

launched," he added.

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3 banks to launch operations

(Continued from page 12)

vided for in the April accord on economic ties between Israel and the Palestinian lands. However, the CBJ has to be prepared for such an eventuality despite all economic reasons that argue against such a move by the PNA.

No accurate figures are available on the amount of Jordanian dinars in circulation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The CBJ estimates it to be around JD 350 million.

Senior Jordanian officials, including CBJ Governor Mohammad Nabulsi, have

said that Jordan is aware of the pitfalls and is prepared for any eventuality, including the issuance of a Palestinian currency.

The flow of dollars from Jordan from the Palestinian lands in exchange for dinars has remained so far under safe limits, and a \$200 million depletion in the foreign currency reserves of Jordan early this year was attributed to reasons that had little to do with Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip coming to Jordan and carrying with them foreign currency in exchange of dinars that they bring in.

PLO, Israel to set date

(Continued from page 1)

mediately rejected the proposal saying it violated the accord launching autonomy in May and was unrealistic. The army would return later as if nothing had happened, he complained.

Other differences have arisen over how much authority to grant the council.

Mr. Arafat wants the body to be endowed with legislative powers like a parliament, while Israel wants to restrict it to administrative functions.

Under the declaration of principles signed in Washington by Israel and the PLO on Sept. 13, 1993, elections were to have been held in July after Israeli forces pulled back from Palestinian populated areas.

In Spain on Thursday Mr. Arafat called for such elec-

tions as a way to bolster the peace process.

PLO officials rejected the idea of a three-day withdrawal during the election period, saying it violated the autonomy accord that details an Israeli redeployment in the West Bank before Palestinian elections are held.

"Elections are a Palestinian goal, and we hope to hold them as soon as possible, but redeployment in the West Bank is also important and I don't think it is practical for the Israeli army to withdraw for three or four days and then return," said Mr. Abu Zayda, a senior PLO official in Gaza.

"Arafat's status in Gaza is important, but it is also important that Israel redeploy in the West Bank," he added, on army radio.

Gaza tension cools down

(Continued from page 1)

The angry sermons went ahead. Prayer leader Sheikh Said Siyam told worshippers that they must turn their anger against Israel rather than provoke a civil war.

"We want our hands to remain white and our bullets will be destined for the chests of the Zionist enemy. We are saying this not because we are weak but we don't want brother to fight brother," he said to widespread murmurs of approval and shouts of "God is great."

A leading Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) activist suggested that Mr. Arafat's police was ready to confiscate weapons from militants displaying them on the street. But Diab Abu Louh, a senior leader of Mr. Arafat's Fateh organisation, said: "There is no decision to disarm these groups. The weapons are holy."

"But we don't want armed militias in the street," he said, adding that attacks on the fledgling institutions of Palestinian self-rule would not be tolerated.

The inside of Palestine Mosque was plastered with black flags of mourning. Huge banners proclaimed, "Arafat you killed national unity" and "Arafat after you destroyed Lebanon, you are making Gaza a second Lebanon." That referred to the clashes between right-wing militias and Palestinians that helped spark the Lebanese civil war.

In his sermon Sheikh Siyam demanded that the

PLO leader drop his claims that Hamas members provoked the fighting by firing on police and by shooting Fateh activists inside the mosque.

"I ask you worshippers: Is it credible that four people were killed inside the mosque?" Sheikh Siyam said, demanding that Mr. Arafat produce evidence.

In Stockholm, a senior PNA official said on Friday the PLO needed to open consultations with Hamas to help rescue the Mideast peace process.

"We don't want a civil war," Nabil Shaath, head of planning for the Palestinian self-rule authority, told a news conference during a three-day visit to Sweden.

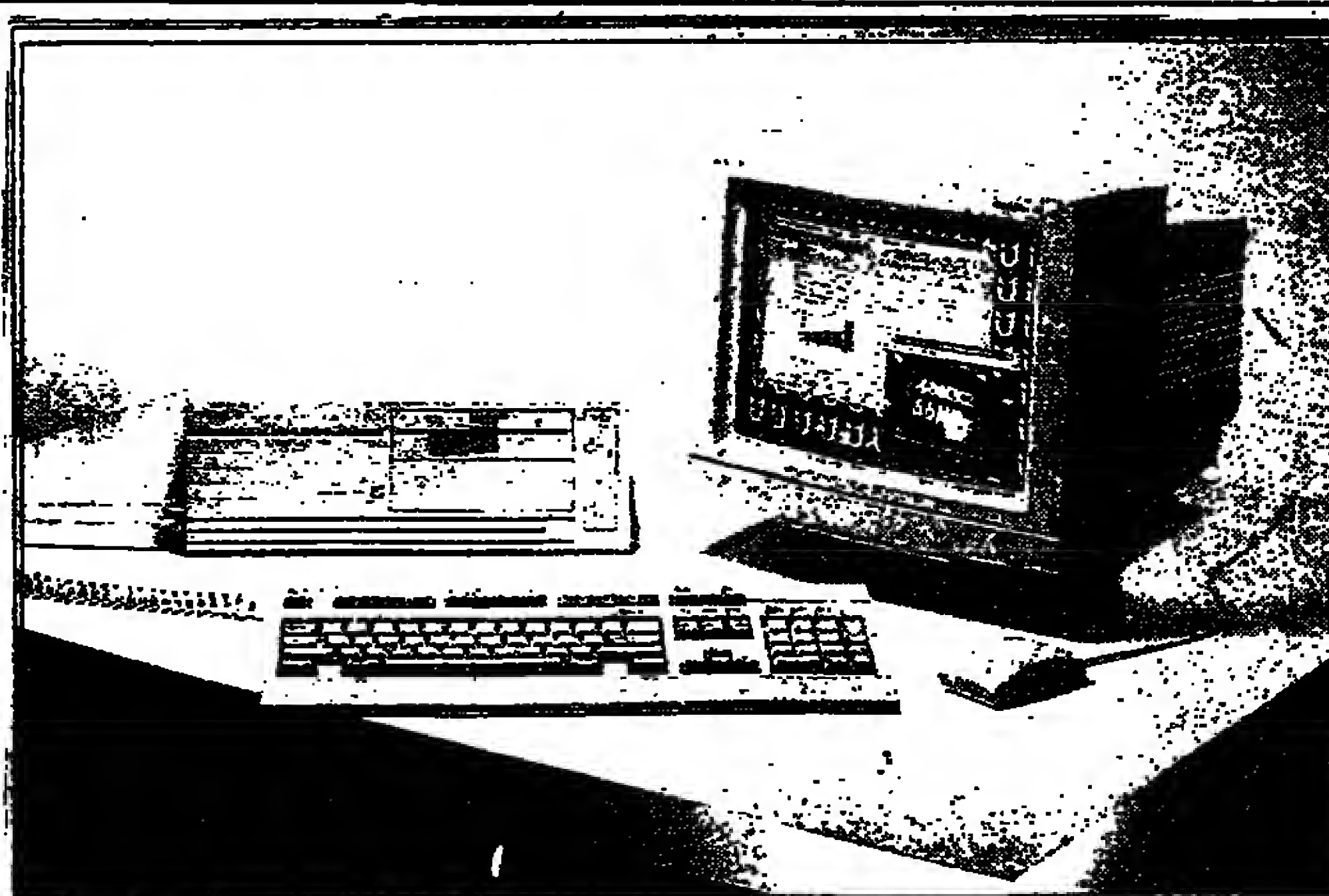
"In order to avoid that, things have to be done by Israel. But from our side we also have responsibility. We need to open up consultations with Hamas," he said.

Dr. Shaath said they had not been prepared to deal with the violence that broke out with Hamas.

"For the first time ever our Palestinian police found themselves facing other Palestinians in the streets. We never expected to face our people in the streets. We have not been prepared to deal with agitated demonstrators," he said.

Dr. Shaath said the PLO needed to engage in long-term consultations with Hamas.

"We need to make an agreement on sharing political decision-making power," he said.



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Arab monetary officials discuss bank reforms today

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab monetary officials meet in Abu Dhabi Saturday to review progress in bank reforms they launched to meet international adequacy standards, an official statement said Friday.

The meeting will bring together members of an auditing committee created by the central banks in the 22-member Arab League to oversee reforms in the more than 400 commercial banks and financial institutions in the region.

The meeting will cover the latest developments in bank reforms and auditing activities in the Arab countries in 1994, said the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), which acts as the secretariat of the Arab central banks.

It is part of the committee's periodical meetings to review progress in reforms aimed at boosting capital adequacy in Arab banks to at least eight per cent, the floor set by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

The Basle Committee, created by BIS to supervise such a process, outlined adequacy rules for banks worldwide as a measure to protect depositors and ensure all banks have enough funds to face any financial crisis.

The committee has also classified all developing nations, except Saudi Arabia, as high risk countries in lending operations on the grounds they have low capital adequacy, the ratio between shareholders' equity and assets. This means loans from industrial states to those countries will be costlier.

Saudi Arabia, the world's leading oil producer and exporter, was exempted because it was the fifth biggest creditor to the International Monetary Fund.

The classification drew criticism from several Arab states mainly those in the Gulf, which argued their bank adequacy met BIS requirements. But the rule has also triggered bank reforms in most member states.

The reforms included stronger intervention by monetary authorities, upgrading auditing activities and setting aside more funds for reserves while cutting risky assets. Some members are also planning to set up funds to guarantee deposits.

The reforms also followed bank crises in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where several banks were affected by the collapse of the UAE-controlled Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

According to the Beirut-based Arab Banks Union, the reforms which were launched in 1990 have produced

results in most member states.

Total assets surged to around \$526 billion in 1993 from \$444 billion in 1992 and deposits to \$326 billion from \$286 billion.

Shareholders' equity, which include the capital and provisions, increased by around eight per cent to \$84 billion. This pushed their average adequacy to 15.9 per cent, nearly double the BIS level.

Bankers said most of the increase came from the oil-rich Gulf states, where reforms are gaining momentum due to weak oil prices. They said several banks in Sudan, Somalia, Iraq and other countries are still far below the BIS limit.

"Arab states are continuing measures to strengthen the financial position of their banks and most of them are now in line with capital adequacy requirements set by Basle," said AMF Chairman Jassim Al Manai, who will open Saturday's auditing meeting at the fund's headquarters.

"But some members are still lagging behind. They need more effort. We are explaining all these developments to Basle Committee," he added.

Expert: GCC states to invest \$15b in chemicals

DOHA (R) — Arab Gulf petrochemical producers plan to build new plants worth \$15 billion in the next six years and are expected to finance \$9.4 billion of the cost through loans, a financial expert said.

The loans will come from a mixture of local and international banks, governments, export credit agencies and regional institutions, said Ahmad Nabil, a project finance officer with Arab Petroleum Investments Corp (APIC).

APIC, owned by 10 Arab states, is a pan-Arab body that funds petroleum projects. The six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have a 64 per cent equity stake in it.

Mr. Nabil told a petrochemical conference in Qatar that producers in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait had announced \$15.675 billion worth of projects which were at different stages in the various states.

The final figures might turn out to be lower than this because of delays, changes in policy or market movements, he said, listing the following projects.

Bahrain — total \$200 million, comprising \$200 million for a plant with capacity for 600,000 tonnes per year (TPA) of urea (Gulf Petrochemical Industries Corp), start up in 1998.

Kuwait — total \$2.4 billion, comprising \$2.3 billion for 650,000 TPA ethylene, 450,000 TPA polyethylene and 340,000 TPA ethylene glycol, (Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC)-Union Carbide Corp. U.K. joint venture), start up 1997. (Note: Kuwait analysts have put the cost at about \$1.9 billion) \$100 million for 80,000 TPA polypropylene, (PIC only) start up 1996.

Oman — total \$1.6 billion, comprising \$700 million for 300,000 TPA olefin complex, start up 1998, \$900,000 for two ammonia/urea plants, total capacity at least one million TPA (Oman Oil Company and partners), start up 1998.

Qatar — total \$1.44 billion, comprising \$500 million for 825,000 TPA methanol, start up 1997, \$750 million for 500,000 TPA methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE)/methanol, start up 1997, \$80 million for 30,000 TPA melamine, start up 1996, \$50 million for 30,000 TPA thermal black carbon, start up 1998, \$60 million for 20,000 TPA maleic anhydride, start up 1998 (Qatar General Petroleum Corp and partners).

Saudi Arabia — Total \$5.335 billion.

International observations: Can U.S. continue as world's largest capital exporter

The following report is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai

Global economics & currencies

In a remarkable development, America has become the world's largest capital exporter in recent years, far surpassing Japan in foreign direct investment and overseas portfolio investment alike. Last year, for example, Americans exported nearly \$180 billion of capital to the rest of the world on a net basis, with roughly one third in the form of direct investment and the remainder in the form of stock and bond purchases overseas. That was nearly triple the amount of comparable capital exports from Japan, and occurred despite the fact that America runs a massive current account deficit while Japan, as the surplus nation, is the more natural capital exporter.

This year, America's capital outflows have moderated, but are still running at an annual rate of around \$140 billion, when both direct investment and portfolio investment are taken into account. Some important questions now are (1) Are outflows on this scale sustainable; and (2) Could a sharp curtailment of American outflows result in increased instability in global financial markets?

Of immediate interest in the wake of a sharp downturn in American equity prices is what the impact might be if American investors some day suddenly decide to bring substantial amounts of their international "money" back home through phone switching via mutual funds — or if Japanese institutional investors decide to do the same. A broader issue is whether America is well-suited to be the world's major financial intermediary, when it suffers from chronic trade deficits and a currency that appears to be in a long-term downturn against other major currencies.

The pronounced weakness of the dollar against the yen this year, which has surprised so many market participants and policymakers, can be understood in this context. Consider how America has emerged as the world's largest exporter of long-term capital, despite its low savings rate and huge trade and current account deficits? This could only have been accomplished by borrowing massively, either directly or indirectly, from Japan, the only nation in the world with substantial surplus savings.

In that sense, the yen-dollar exchange rate has become the linch pin of the international financial system, one that has buckled under the strain of Americans trying to finance deficit nations in Asia, Europe, and Latin America when America itself is short of funds. Unlike the years immediately following World War II, when America enjoyed a massive trade surplus and was therefore a natural creditor nation, the nation's chronic trade and budget deficits make an unlikely choice to be a major capital exporter.

In effect, America's external payments position now resembles that of a large, unregulated savings and loan, which is borrowing short-term funds from its "depositors" — i.e. foreign private banks, institutional investors, and (increasingly) foreign central banks — while it lends long-term funds to foreign governments and corporations. This situation appears to have developed partly because the more natural creditor nation, Japan, has been less willing or able to directly finance deficit nations elsewhere since the collapse of its real estate and stock market severely weakened the capital position of its major financial institutions.

America's evolution into a large international financial intermediary has so far undoubtedly had benign effects on the world economy, by channeling growth capital to developed and developing nations alike. The accompanying

Canadian warned of tough times, told not to be complacent

OTTAWA (AFP) — Canadians were warned that while their country may be one of the best places in which to live, they can no longer be complacent about their standards of living.

The warning came from Auditor General Denis Desautels in an annual report to parliament.

The report, as usual, pointed out areas of government inefficiency.

But this time it was as much a warning to Canadians that the government of Prime Minister Jean Chretien, in

office for just over a year, was right in preparing Canadians for tougher economic times.

"While Canada remains one of the best places in the world in which to live," said Mr. Desautels, "Canadians cannot afford to be complacent."

"The country faces a difficult, challenging situation amid political, economic and social changes that reverberate throughout the world," said Mr. Desautels. "The tough choices are now."

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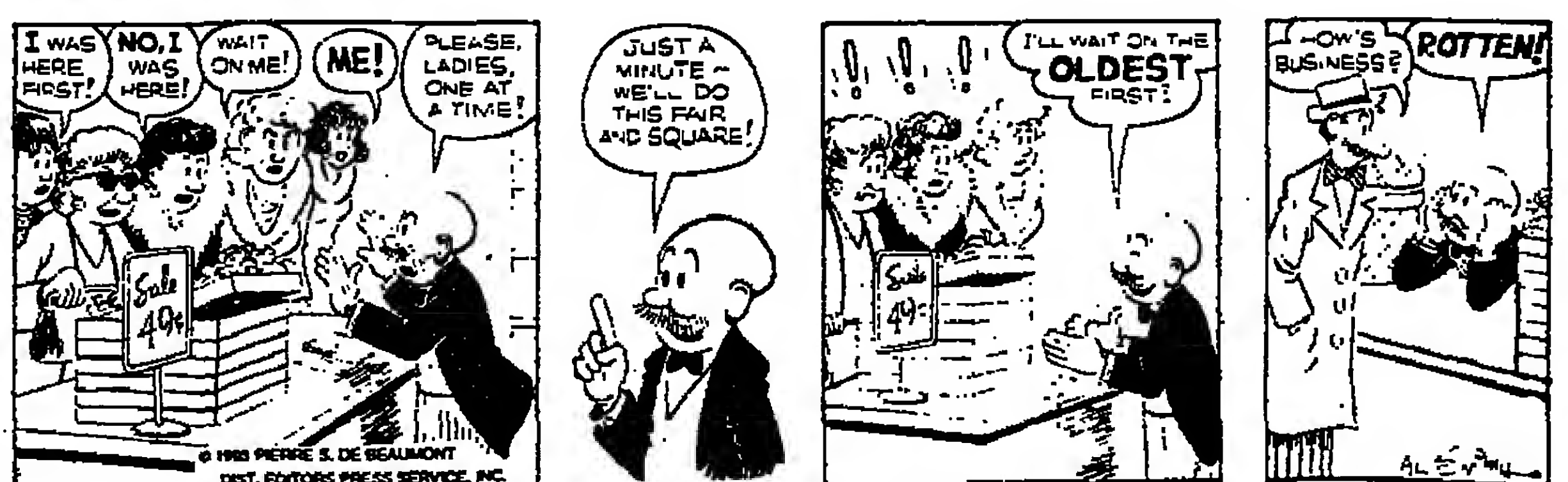
Peanuts



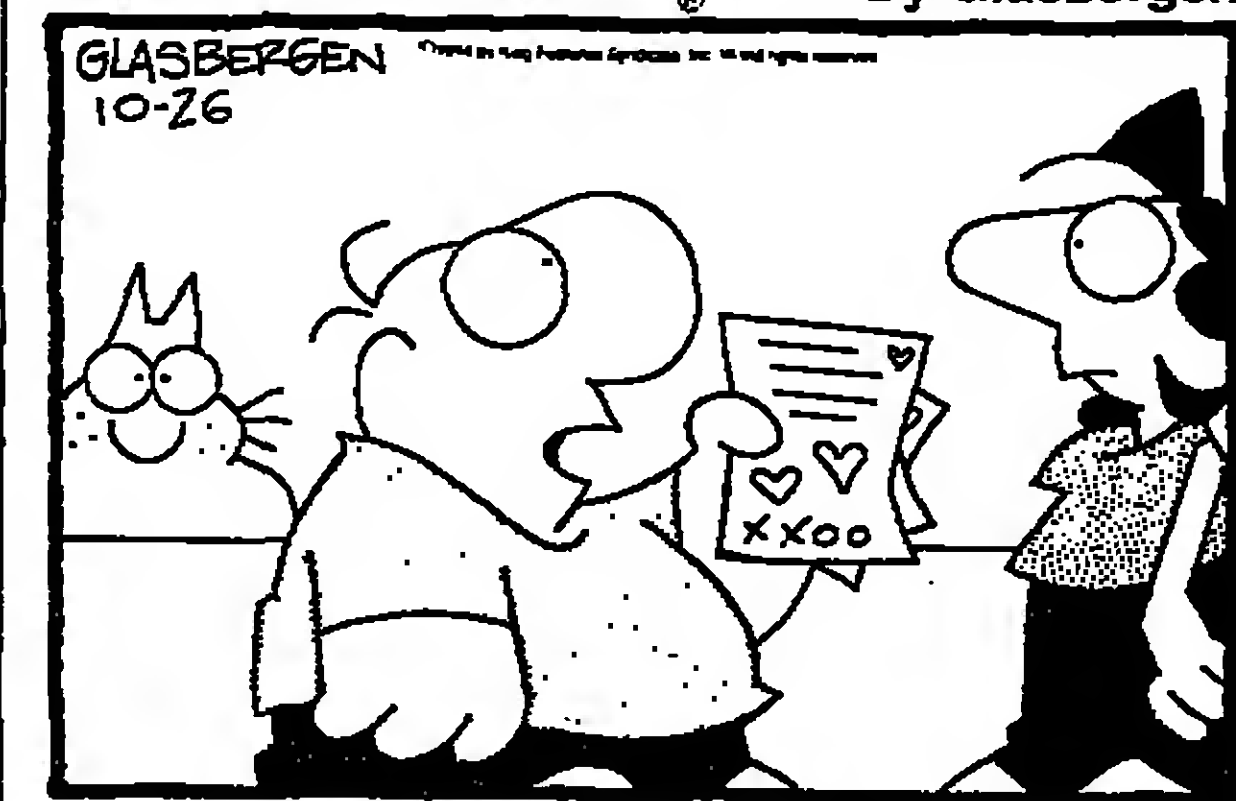
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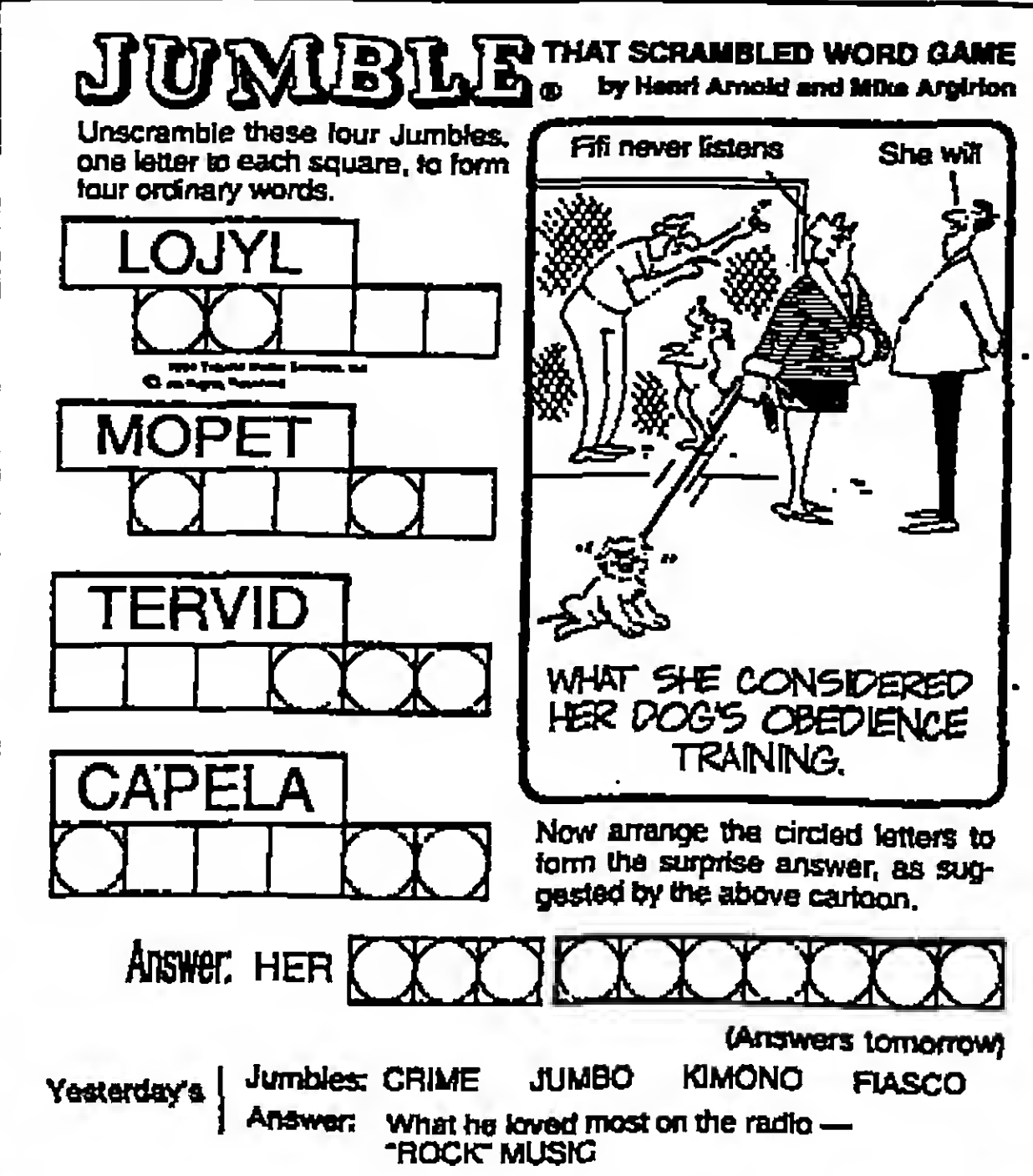


THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"I found my old love poems in the attic. Why on earth did you ever marry a doofus like me???"

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FORECAST FOR SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This last day of Libra finds you evening to be the best time to put across your ideas or products as you acquire a well rounded understanding of exactly what it is that the general public wants.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now your home should certainly be the centre of your activities so even though you are obligated to spend part of the day outside, think of basic interests.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your own personal aims now have a good chance to come to fruition and especially where seeing the person of whom you like recreational outlets are concerned.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You are today interested in doing whatever will bring you more articles of value or beauty into your life as well as improve appearance of property.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You exude so much charm and magnetism now that you can get almost anything you want by approaching potential benefactors with a smile.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Put aside that extravagant quality that is so a part of your character and withdraw within yourself, considering what you can do to have more of life's goodies.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Whatever loyal friends are available are the ones now who will give you a very helpful hand in gaining some highly desirable desire that you have evening to be the best time to put across your ideas or products as you acquire a well rounded understanding of exactly what it is that the general public wants.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The world is your oyster today if you get dolled up in your best bib and tucker and venture forth into the world, letting your ambitions be known.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make as many new and exciting contacts with fascinating persons as you can and get them to release to you some knowledge that can smooth your pathway.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are not apt to be as emotional as your attachment would like you to be today is one of those times when you can, would benefit from a romantic attitude.

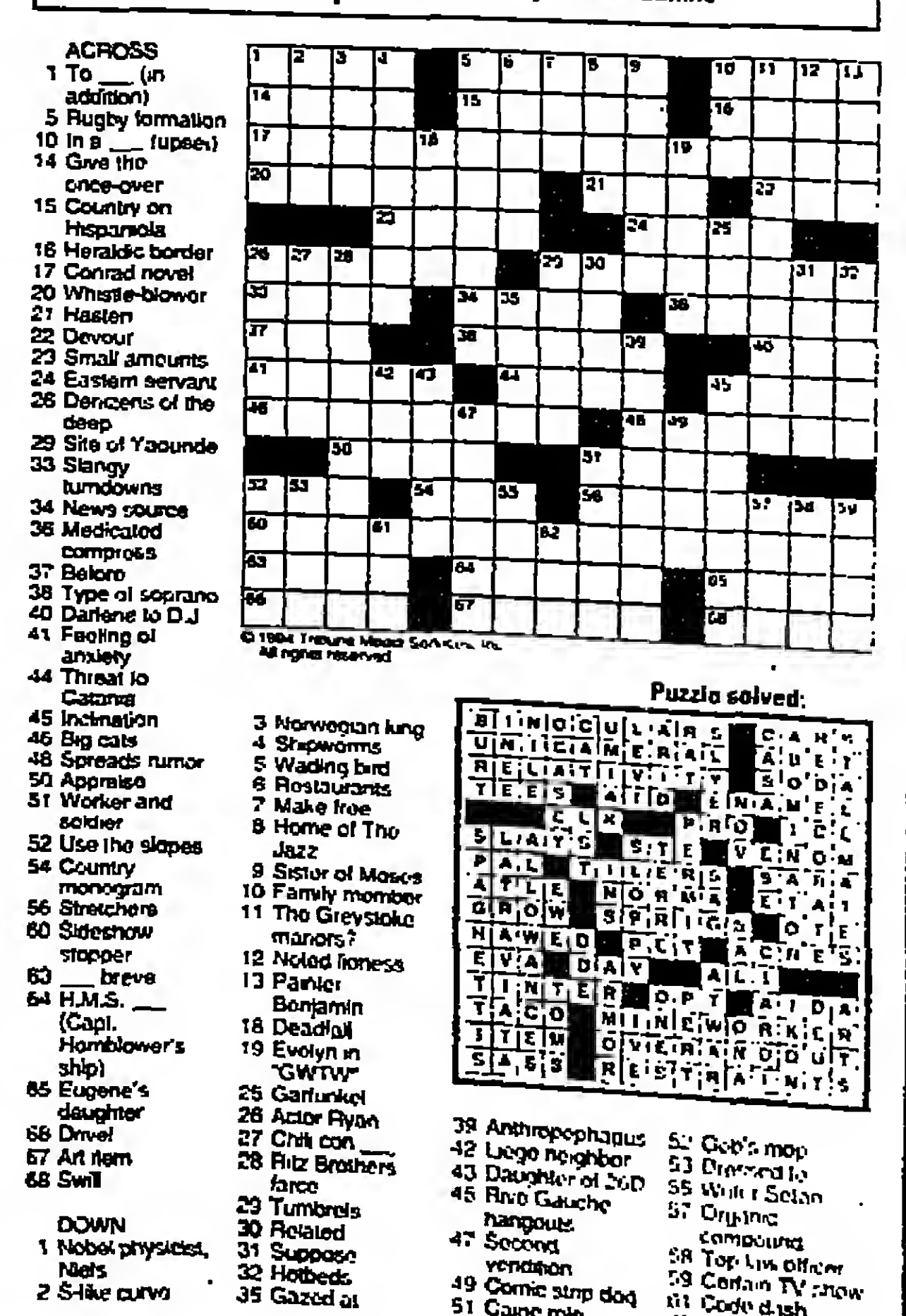
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) An overly sensitive associate is the best one to help you to get a better awareness of how to bring a benefit that is important into your life.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Whatever your activities are today be sure you do not hasten through them but organize a sensible schedule by which to perform and to do them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You want to have a good time but you also want it to have some special meaning in your life so choose the recreations you decide upon to extract the greatest results.

Birthstone of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

THE Daily Crossword by William Canino



Financial Markets

Jordan Times

In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York 23/11/94	Tokyo 24/11/94
sterling Pound	1.5699	1.5665**
Deutsche Mark	1.5566	1.5565
Swiss Franc	1.5195	1.5182**
French Franc	5.3495	5.3439**
Japanese Yen	98.46	98.41
European Currency Unit	1.2230	1.2233**

USD Per JLD:
European Opening at 1:00 p.m. GMT

Europe Currency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.31	5.68	6.12	6.43
Sterling Pound	5.37	5.75	6.25	6.75
Deutsche Mark	4.81	5.00	5.06	5.43
Swiss Franc	3.43	3.75	3.93	4.31
French Franc	5.31	5.43	5.62	6.12
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.18	2.25	2.50
European Currency Unit	5.6	5.81	6.06	6.63

Interest rate for 100% currency: U.S. Dollars 1.0000% or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	384.75	7.60	Silver	5.17	0.117

* 1/2 oz

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6990	0.7010
Sterling Pound	1.0948	1.1003
Deutsche Mark	0.4457	0.4509
Swiss Franc	0.5296	0.5322
French Franc	0.1307	0.1314
Japanese Yen	0.7095	0.7130
Dutch Guilder	0.4004	0.4024
Swedish Krona	0.0445	0.0457
Italian Lira	0.0435	0.0457
Belgian Franc	0.0435	0.0457

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6570	1.6512
Lebanese Lira	0.041235	0.042320
Saudi Riyal	0.1852	0.1869
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3650
Qatari Riyal	0.1908	0.1920
Egyptian Pound	0.2080	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.8000	1.8120
UAE Dirham	0.1897	0.1906
Greek Drachma	0.2740	0.3225
Cypriot Pound	1.3970	1.4980

Per 100

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QUOTED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (23/11/1994 - 24/11/1994)

RECENT REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME

TRADING VOLUME

PERCENTAGE

OPENING PRICE

CLOSING PRICE

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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Daily Business Beat

Compiled by Samir Shafiq Ghawi

★ The management of the Pepsi Cola company has agreed to reinstate all workers it recently dismissed. The workers dismissed from the Jordan Batteries Company in Marka will be given wages for the months of November and December and will be provided with suitable jobs elsewhere with the help of the Ministry of Labour and the Association of the Workers in Petroleum and Chemical Industries. The ministry was successful, however, in persuading the Jordan-Gulf Bank to return the employees it dismissed to their jobs as usual. (Sawt Al Shaab).

★ The Central Bank has not yet issued any regulations concerning the price or the legality of the shekel which Israeli authorities consider it a local currency and do not allow it to be taken abroad or brought into Israel. Moneychangers say trading the shekel in Jordan is not acceptable (Ad-Dustour).

★ French industrial and technological products will be exhibited from Nov. 26 until Dec. 1, 1994 (Ad-Dustour).

★ The Chamber of Commerce and car dealers hail the reduction in tariffs as a right step that would serve the national economy, ease the burdens on citizens and encourage them to buy cars (Ad-Dustour).

★ Bankers do not see any harm to the Jordanian dinar as a result of the increase in interest rates on the U.S. dollar. They note that the Central Bank's policy is to give the Jordanian currency a two per cent interest edge over that given to the dollar to avert an outflow of capital. However, the general manager of ANZ Grindlays Bank and Philadelphia Bank said banks should raise interest rates on the dinar as an incentive to depositors in the local currency and to prepare for the coming era that will require large investments (Ad-Dustour).

★ The Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing Company denied responsibility for flooding the market with frozen chicken, destabilising the local poultry market and causing losses to farmers. The company accused the Ministry of Supply of the act and noted that the ministry had large stocks of French chicken for a long time and with an expiry date in February, the ministry decided to dump it in the market before the end of the year (Ad-Dustour).

★ A large investment group which owns many factories and companies is suffering from a severe financial crisis that may lead to its bankruptcy. Due to managerial reason and the slow business cycle, the group has accumulated JD 60 million of losses equivalent to three times the value of its assets. Owners of the holding group have been prevented from travelling as eight banks got judicial clearance to confiscate the assets of the group which had a total indebtedness of JD 60 million to the eight banks. One of the many properties seized by the banks was the factory which manufactures cans used in soft drinks industries (Al Ra'i).

★ Rajab Al Saad will succeed Taher Kanaan as general manager of the Industrial Development Bank. Mr. Saad joined the bank in 1965 and since 1973 has been holding the post of deputy general manager (Al Ra'i).

★ A senior official at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation said the government cannot go on bearing and subsidising water costs. Noting that the cost of water for irrigation was only three to five per cent of the total agricultural production costs, the official said that the revenue from water charges does not cover more than 25 per cent of the cost of operating and maintaining water projects and that farmers will have to gradually bear the full cost. The latest increase in water charges has covered 60-70 per cent of operational costs (Al Ra'i).

★ The recommendations of a regional seminar on optimisation of water in agriculture said that raising water charges for irrigation water is a difficult decision for the government but this decision has to be taken if conserving water was a national priority (Al Ra'i).

★ Vegetable oil factories have stopped production and are demanding the Ministry of Supply to allow them to raise prices due to the recent increase in the international prices of vegetable oils. The scarcity of oil and ghee in the market has led to prices rising by about 30 per cent over the normal levels (Ad-Dustour).

★ Total bank assets rose by seven per cent to reach JD 7,249 million (\$10.38 billion) at the end of September from a year earlier. It is expected that real economic growth this year will be around 5.5 per cent (Ad-Dustour).

Gaza unrest scrambles AFM trading

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Just as market watchers were sitting back after seeing a revival of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) after several months of stagnation, last week's violence in the Gaza Strip scrambled all expectations and sent trading and stock prices on downward spiral, brokers said Friday.

The weekly report of the AFM showed that turnover for last week was JD 9.5 million, down 39.5 per cent from the previous week's JD 15.8 million.

The general price index based on stocks of 60 major companies closed at 147.8 points, down 1.5 points one

per cent from the week's opening of 148.7 per cent.

Forty-six companies whose shares were traded during the week ended with losses as the week ended, while 21 showed gains and 10 remained stable, the AFM report said.

Commercial banks and financial institutions accounted for JD 4 million or 42.1 per cent of the turnover, followed by the industrial sector with JD 3.18 million or 33.5 per cent, the services sector with JD 2.26 million or 23.8 per cent, and insurance stock with JD 60,000 or 0.6 per cent.

The AFM report said 3.8 million shares changed hands under 4,500 contracts during the week.

Brokers said last week's violence pitting the Palestine self-rule authority's police and opponents of the peace process that left 14 people dead and more than 200 wounded and raised the spectre of a Palestinian civil war had taken its toll on the market.

"Once again, the Jordanian stock market has shown how susceptible it is to any serious development in the region," asserted a broker. "The situation is likely to remain the same until peace takes hold in all its dimensions in the region, whether in the context of the Palestinians or any of the neighbouring countries."

The AFM was stagnant

since April this year, and stock prices as well as turnover took a heavy beating because of uncertainties of the peace process coupled with fears that capital gains were no longer going to be exempt from income tax.

Part of the uncertainty over the peace negotiations was cleared with the signing and formalisation of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty over the last five weeks and fears of taxation were alleviated with a government assurance that any such move was not immediate.

"Just as investors and the market in general were taking a deep breath, getting ready to resume normal business, the Gaza business stuck and scrambled the situation," said the broker, who cannot be identified under standing AFM guidelines.

However, "it should be noted that despite the plunge, the turnover last week was far higher than the four or five million dinar volumes that we saw since April," added the broker. "There is enough confidence in the market to see the situation through unless something else happens."

However, several brokers expressed fear that in the absence of clear indications that the Palestine self-rule authority is not in full control of the situation in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, year-end dealings that traditionally set the trend for the first quarter of the new year may be seriously set back.

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Indiana Pacers defeat Golden State

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Though the NBA season is still very young, the Indiana Pacers seem to have turned things around while the Golden State warriors have stumbled after an impressive start.

Indiana has won four of its last five, holding opponents to an average of just 88 points a game in that stretch. The latest victory came Thursday night, a 123-96 drubbing of the Warriors.

Golden State, after starting the season with five straight victories, has lost two straight and three of five. The Warriors have also failed to score 100 points two straight games — a rare occurrence for the league's second-ranked offense.

The performance Thursday, the only game in the NBA, left Warriors coach Don Nelson looking for positives.

"There is some sort of crazy way you become closer when things like this happen," Nelson said. "When we tried to match up with them, we got our teeth kicked in."

Nelson is trying to blend two new players, Rony Seikaly who Tom Gugliotta, into his high-scoring offense. He knows the transition will take some time.

"We have too many new players and too many young players," Nelson said. "We won't be the team we want to be until mid-season, and we understand that."

Still, Nelson didn't underestimate the Pacers.

"I think when you look at their tenacity on defense and their offensive patience, it's really a credit to their coaches and players," he said.



Cleveland Cavaliers' Michael Cage fouls the arm of the Charlotte Hornets Kenny Gattison (right). The Cavaliers won 89-86 (AFP photo)

Pacers coach Larry Brown couldn't agree more.

"There were so many positive things out there," Brown said. "We were really good. Defensively, we did a good job of staying in front of people. You win defending in this league."

Brown singled out centre Rik Smits for praise.

"Rik was terrific at both ends," Brown said after Smits scored 28 on 12-of-14 shooting, he added four rebounds, and forced Seikaly out of the game with first-quarter foul trouble.

Brown, who had questioned his team's commitment after an up-and-down start, found plenty to praise this time. The Pacers logged a season-high 14 steals, and forced the Warriors into 23 turnovers and 42 percent shooting — both season lows.

The Pacers also held Golden State 18 points under its season average, and dominated them on the boards, 48-31.

Reggie Miller and Byron Scott combined to shoot down Latrell Sprewell, the league's number-three scorer. Sprewell, averaging 28.1 points, managed just 11 on 4-of-11 shooting.

Miller went scoreless in the first half, and ended with a season-low 10 points, all coming in the third period.

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Miami	2	7	.222	5
Central Division				
Indiana	6	3	.667	—
Detroit	6	4	.600	1/2
Milwaukee	5	4	.556	1
Chicago	6	5	.545	1
Cleveland	5	5	.500	1 1/2
Charlotte	4	6	.400	2 1/2
Atlanta	4	7	.364	3

Western Conference				
Midwest Division				
Houston	9	2	.818	—
Denver	6	3	.667	2
San Antonio	5	4	.556	3
Utah	6	5	.545	3
Dallas	4	4	.500	3 1/2
Minnesota	1	10	.091	8

Pacific Division				
Golden state	7	3	.700	—
Phoenix	7	3	.700	—
Portland	5	4	.556	1 1/2
L.A. Lakers	5	5	.500	2
Seattle	5	5	.500	2
Sacramento	4	4	.500	2
L.A. Clippers	0	11	.000	7 1/2

Paradise Creek at No. 3 in Japan Cup draw

FUCHU, Japan (AP) — Favourite Paradise Creek of the United States drew the No. 3 post position in a drawing Friday for Sunday's Japan Cup, the world's richest horse race.

"Good, it's an inside position, but I like it," said its trainer, Bill Mott.

The 5-year-old horse won eight of 10 starts this year but finished third in the 1 1/2-mile (2,400-metre) Breeders' Cup Turf Nov. 5.

Another Mott entry, Fraise, drew the No. 2 slot, just inside the Paradise Creek.

Sunday's \$391.5 million yen (\$4.03 million) race will be held over the 2,400-metre Tokyo Race Course at Fuchu, on Tokyo's outskirts. The winner's share is 169 million yen (\$1.74 million).

Johann Quatz and Sandpit, both of the United States, drew the No. 9 and 10 post positions, respectively.

Two other U.S. entries, Grand Flotilla and Rain Trap, also will break side-by-side, from the No. 12 and 13 spots, respectively.

"It's a good post position," Sandpit's trainer Richard Mandella said.

"My horse has tactical speed, so I don't think it would matter too much where he comes from the gate."

Last year, Mandella entered Kotashan in the race, which came second to Japan's Legacy World.

Sandpit, who has raced impressively in the United States this season, is the first Brazilian-bred horse to enter the Japan Cup. The 5-year-old beat Grand Flotilla in the Oak Tree Invitational on Oct. 9, which was his latest outing.

Starting from the favourable No. 7 position will be Australia's Jeune, winner of the Melbourne Cup early this month.

"I'm very happy that we can get a good post position," Jeune's jockey, Wayne Harris, said. "I want to keep my horse in the middle of the field during the race, so I think this is a good post position."

French challengers Apple Tree and Hernando drew the No. 1 and 12 post positions respectively.

Man. United fall back on youngsters

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson will again have to rely on his youngsters against Arsenal at Highbury Saturday.

None of the senior players who missed the 3-1 midweek European Champions League defeat in Gothenburg have recovered from their injuries.

Skipper Steve serves the second game of a three-match suspension, which means David May switches to central defence with Gary Neville slotting in at right-back.

Lee Sharpe will be out of action for at least another month after an X-ray revealed a hairline ankle fracture.

Paul Parker, who had a successful operation on his ankle injury this week, could be missing for around 12 weeks.

Gordon Strachan and Tony Dorico return to the Leeds squad for the Eiland Road clash with Nottingham Forest.

Strachan, who retires at the end of the season, is poised to return after a back injury which threatened to end his career. Dorico has shaken off a hamstring injury that has kept him out for three matches.

But versatile South African Lucas Radebe faces a five-week lay-off after damaging knee ligaments at Queens Park Rangers last week.

Nottingham Forest could be without leading scorer Stan Collymore. He suffered

a recurring ankle injury in Wednesday's county cup final against Notts County and will have a late fitness test. Jason Lee stands by.

Striker Bradley Allen is back in Queens Park Rangers' squad for the clash with Blackburn at Ewood Park after coming off the transfer list at his own request.

Defenders Colin Calderwood and Dean Austin face fitness tests as Tottenham seek their first victory under Gerry Francis at Liverpool. The pair picked up injuries in Wednesday's goalless draw with Chelsea. Spurs' first clean sheet of the campaign.

Crystal Palace are set to recall Bobby Bowry for the home clash with Southampton.

The 24-year-old could return in midfield with John Humphrey switching to full-back in place of Darren Patterson.

Southampton defender Simon Charlton is set to return to first-team action after shaking off a virus.

Bruce Grobbelaar, who kept a clean sheet against Arsenal last week, will continue in goal for his first match away from The Dell since match-fixing allegations were published.

Central defender Ken Monkou is still suspended so Francis Benali will continue alongside Richard Hall.

Manchester City manager Brian Horton will keep faith with the side which won at Leicester Sunday for the home game with Wimbledon.

Norwich manager John

Deehan has added 19-year-old forward Jamie Cureton to his squad for their home match against Leicester, in an attempt to improve the Canaries' strike rate.

Mike Sheron has recovered from a hamstring injury and will also challenge Mark Robins and Rob Newman for a place up front.

Basement club Ipswich have midfielder pair Stuart Slater and Gavin Johnson back after hip injuries for the trip to Newcastle.

Merson reveals cocaine habit

Arsenal and England striker Paul Merson admitted Friday to having used cocaine for most of this year.

The 26-year-old star, quoted in the Daily Mirror and Sun newspapers, said: "It's almost ruined my life. I've jeopardised my career and my marriage."

"Now I want everyone to know what's happened to put it all behind me and to start with a clean slate."

He claims Highbury manager George Graham has given him a week to sort himself out.

The four-million-rated player said he spent up to 150-pounds a night snorting the drug marathon drinking sessions.

But he insisted he knew of no other players who use cocaine and said he decided to quit the drug during a marathon binge on November 10.

Abedi Pele on show in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South Africa will see Ghana's midfield magician Abedi Pele perform his tricks for the first time on Saturday in the opening round of a four-nation tournament.

Lofus Versfeld rugby stadium in Pretoria hosts an appetizing double-header in which Cameroon play Ivory Coast and South Africa confront the legendary Black Stars.

The football feast moves to another rugby site, Boet Erasmus stadium in the coastal city of Port Elizabeth, on November 30 where South Africa face Ivory Coast and Ghana meet Cameroon.

In the final round on December 4 at Ellis Park in Johannesburg, venue of the 1995 World Cup rugby final, Ivory Coast tackle Ghana and South Africa oppose Cameroon.

Pele, who left France for Italian club Torino, appeared tired when the Black Stars arrived, and offered few comments.

Arguably one of the greatest footballers produced by Africa, Pele was the undisputed king until Nigerian forward Rashidi Yekini burst into the limelight last year.

Asron Villa midfielder Nii Udarley Lamptey, branded the 'new Pele' when he led Ghana to the world junior title three years ago, is another major attraction in a formidable squad.

But South African coach Clive Barker seems unconcerned about facing a team which has made a superb start to its qualifying campaign for the 1996 African Nations' Cup.

"I do not care whether Ghana bring Pele, or even Romario," he told reporters at the national training camp outside Johannesburg.

"We are going to win this tournament."

Barker will lack his unavailable 'Foreign Legion', notably Leeds United pair Lucas Radebe, a commanding central defender, and frequent scorer Philemon Masinga.

Turkish-based captain Steve Komphela also misses out after playing in every match since South Africa returned to the world stage in 1992, following decades of apartheid-induced isolation.

Although Cameroon and Ivory Coast are ranked among the top six African national teams, neither has impressed recently with the Indomitable Lions suffering a humiliating loss in Lesotho.

Comaneci receives warm welcome in home town

ONESTI (R) — Nadia Comaneci, the first gymnast to score a perfect 10 in the Olympics, returned to her Romanian home town Wednesday, five years after fleeing communism for the west.

"Five is my lucky number and I said to myself: 'Now I can go home,'" the 32-year-old triple Olympic gold medalist told crowds in the small town of Onesti, in the province of Moldavia.

Comaneci returned to Romania on Monday night with the Romanian women's gymnastics team after it won its third world championship at a tournament in Dortmund, Germany.

In a country with little to shout about since its 1989 anti-communist revolution toppled dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, Comaneci remains a national hero.

Onesti celebrated her visit by renaming her old school the Nadia Comaneci High School, giving her a large symbolic wooden key to the town as well as the title of citizen of honor.

Deputy mayor Ionel Munteanu was overcome with emotion when he presented Comaneci with the key to Onesti.

"Nadia belongs to the world, but first and foremost she belongs to this place," he said.

Comaneci said: "I am very, very happy to be here this is one of the greatest days of my life."

Much has changed since the 14-year-old Comaneci enchanted the world at the 1976 Montreal Olympics, winning three gold medals with seven 10s — an unprecedented achievement.

In those days Onesti was called Gheorghiu-Dej — the name of the first communist post-war dictator.

Outside her old school some 300 people chanted "Nadia, Nadia, Nadia" and stretched for a glimpse of their idol.

"I dream of becoming a star like Nadia" said a little girl named Anca.

Before the ceremony, Comaneci visited her

father's humble flat in a working class district of the town. Gheorghe Comaneci, 61, was moved to tears when his daughter received the award.

Comaneci fled into self-imposed exile five years ago this week, less than a month before Ceausescu — who regarded her as a national hero — was overthrown and executed in the bloodiest of the eastern European revolutions of 1989.

President Ion Iliescu welcomed Comaneci home when he met her and the victorious gymnastics team. "Across time, from Nadia's generation to today, we have another gold generation."

Comaneci said she would donate \$100,000 to help the development of Romanian gymnastics.

"The national team's success at Dortmund was the perfect opportunity to make this visit and for me to donate \$100,000 to the Romanian Federation as my participation, and as a sign of thanks for what I have received," she said.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Chinese world champion banned for 2 years

LAUSANNE (R) — World champion Yang Aihua of China was suspended for two years following a positive dope test, the International Swimming Federation (FINA) said in a statement Wednesday. Yang won the women's world title in the 400 metres freestyle in Rome in September.

Swindon's Waddle bid rejected

SWINDON (AFP) — Swindon, who sacked manager John Gorman Monday, have failed in their attempt to secure Sheffield Wednesday's former England star Chris Waddle to take over as player-manager here Wednesday. Wednesday manager Trevor Francis confirmed that his club's chairman had received an approach from Swindon but that the player is staying at Hillsborough. Francis said: "I have spoken to Chris, who is under contract for another 18 months, and would like him to stay and that is what he wants. He has worked very hard to get fit again after his injury and is looking no further ahead than playing again and getting back into our side."

Tag Heuer signs for America's Cup challenge

AUCKLAND (AFP) — Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer announced Friday it would be the main sponsor of one of two New Zealand syndicates competing for next year's America's Cup in San Diego. New Zealand skipper Chris Dickson initially attempted to float his bid as a sharemarket company but it failed to attract enough subscribers and now his 75-foot (22 metre) Bruce Farr-designed racer will be called Tag Heuer and the campaign, once known as Win New Zealand, is now Tag Heuer Challenge.

Marseille official under judicial control

MARSEILLE (R) — Former European soccer champions Marseille were in more trouble after their financial director Alain Laroche was placed under judicial control in an inquiry over the French club's accounts. Laroche, who had already been placed under investigation in the same case, has been ordered to pay 300,000 francs (\$56,391) bail, judicial sources said. Former Marseille president Bernard Tapie has already been placed under investigation in the inquiry, launched in 1992, for the same charges of irregularities in the payment of players' transfer fees. Marseille play in the second division after being relegated over allegations they bribed opponents Valenciennes to throw a key-league match in May last year.

Advocaat quits Dutch national team

AMSTERDAM (R) — Dutch national soccer coach Dick Advocaat is to join former league champions PSV Eindhoven, with Guus Hiddink taking over as manager of the national side next year, the National Soccer Federation (KNVB) said Friday. Hiddink, himself a former PSV coach, has signed a contract with

the KNVB from January 1 to the European Championships in England in 1996. Advocaat has signed a two and a half year contract with PSV, European Champions in 1988. He will quit as national coach after the European championship qualifier against Luxembourg December 14, the KNVB said.

Olympic champion in emergency surgery

ROME (R) — Olympic cross-country skiing dual gold medalist Manuela Di Centa was recovering after emergency surgery for an intestinal complaint. Italian team officials said the current World Cup titleholder underwent a two-hour operation during which doctors removed part of a perforated lower intestine. She had returned to Italy from training for the new season in Sweden after complaining of stomach pains and was taken to a hospital in the northern town of Ferrara. The Italian enjoyed a haul of five medals from five races at the Winter Games in Lillehammer, taking gold in the 15 and 30 kilometre events.

China's Zhou sets women's world jerk record

ISTANBUL (R) — China's Zhou Meihong set a world jerk record in the women's 70kg category at the World Weightlifting Championships, lifting 128.5 kg. Zhou beat the previous mark of 128.0 kg set by compatriot Tang Weifang last month at the Asian Games in Hiroshima. German Marc Huster broke the world combined record in the men's 83 kg, totalling 382.5 kg after a 210 kg record-equaling jerk. The previous combined mark was a world standard of 380. Then, Turkey's Sunay Bulut broke the world jerk record in the men's 83 kg with 210.5, beating Huster's 210.0 set at last year's world championships in Melbourne and equalled by himself earlier in the day.

Sharpe blow for United

LONDON (R) — Manchester United and England winger Lee Sharpe will be out of action for at least another month after an X-ray revealed a hairline ankle fracture. Sharpe, 23, was injured in United's 2-0 third round League Cup defeat at Newcastle October 26. United's 30-year-old full-back Paul Parker, who had a successful operation on his ankle injury this week, is likely to remain sidelined for about 12 weeks.

French youngsters use drugs in sport

PARIS (AFP) — Up to eight per cent of French schoolkids could be using performance enhancing drugs in sport, it was claimed Friday. A survey showed that 2.2 per cent of those interviewed knowingly took banned substances. By adding those who took products which they thought "perhaps" boosted performance, the total rose to 7.7 per cent. A total of 10.4 per cent said they had friends who used doping in sport. The survey, carried out by two sports doctors in the Toulouse region in 1992, had originally been published as a scientific paper in 1993.

Kenya withdraws from hosting Africa Nations' Cup

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya officially withdrew on Friday from hosting the Africa Nations' Cup in 1996 because of a shortage of funds.

Culture and social services minister Hussein Maalim Mohammad told reporters that Kenya decided to pull out because the cost of the enterprise had risen from an initial 40 million shillings (\$856,000) to 265 million shillings (\$5.67 million).

"With the current economic situation, and given that hosting costs have gone up... the Kenya government finds it impossible to upgrade its facilities in readiness for the 1996 Africa Cup of nations," Hussein said.

He said that Kenya had bid to host the tournament because it had thought that the

Confederation of African Football (CAF) would allow matches to be held in one city.

But CAF made clear that it also wanted some matches to be held in the coastal port city of Mombassa, he said.

"Given that we have to base some matches in Nairobi and others in Mombassa, and with the fact that CAF wants Mombassa stadium to be of a 20,000 capacity, the government is unable to secure funds to upgrade the Mombassa stadium," he said.

Last week officials said that authorities in Mombassa had estimated it would cost 115 million shillings (\$2.46 million) to renovate its stadium.

The government pledged three months ago to provide

the cash out work had not yet begun. CAF officials warned they were returning for a final inspection trip December 9.

The Kenya Football Federation (KFF) said it had no money and Mombassa council offered only five million shillings (\$107,000) towards renovation costs.

Kenya will automatically be barred from the 1996 championships whose qualifying rounds are in their preliminary stages, sports officials said.

The minister said that he did not know whether the government would be able to pay any fines that might be imposed on Kenya by CAF.

South Africa is now tipped as a candidate to host the tournament.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSCH ©1993 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 1 Dbl 3 ♣ ?
What action do you take?
A.—There would be no problem if you were sure partner had four clubs. Still, you don't want East's preempt to scare you out of the auction and there might be some lead-directional value to a bid of four clubs. That would be our choice.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A Q 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 1 Dbl 3 ♣ ?
What action do you take?
A.—Preempts were designed to make life difficult and this one has succeeded. If you do anything but double, naturally for takeout, you run the risk of missing four spades, which might be the only makeable game.

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 7 2 ♣ 10 6 5 2 ♠ 7 4 10 8 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 NT 2 NT
What action do you take?
A.—If you choose to bid three clubs, no one could accuse you of taking your life in your hands. However, that is not likely to stop the opponents from bidding, nor will it get your side to game. We would bid three no trump and take our chances.

Q.4—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 8 2 ♣ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 1 NT 2 NT
What action do you take?
A.—This is simply a question of hand evaluation. With four good trumps and the king in partner's hand you are just good enough for an invitational raise to three spades.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A Q 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 1 ♠ 1 ♠ 2 ♠
What action do you take?
A.—This is simply a question of hand evaluation. With four good trumps and the king in partner's hand you are just good enough for an invitational raise to three spades.

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A 7 6 4 ♠ 7 2 ♣ 10 6 5 2 ♠ 7 4 10 8 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 1 ♠ 1 ♠ 2 ♠
What action do you take?
A.—You have a very good minimum, but no action other than pass suggests itself—your heart suit is too poor to introduce at the two-level. If the queen of spades the queen of hearts and we would venture two hearts.

Q.7—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A Q 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ 10 9



PSG's strikes David Ginola (left) struggles to get hold of the ball with Bayern's Lothar Matthäus (right/top) in their UEFA League match (AFP photo)

PSG hope to narrow gap with Nantes

PARIS (R) — Paris St Germain, fresh from their European conquests, have every hope of moving up on the shoulders of leaders Nantes as the French League reaches the halfway stage at the weekend.

The Parisians, who beat Bayern Munich in Germany in the Champions' League Wednesday to give themselves a seventh successive win in the European Cup this season, should prove too strong for Bordeaux at the Parc Des Princes.

PSG have hit peak form after an erratic start to their league campaign and won in Munich despite resting several of their regular first team.

Brazilians Valdo and Rai are likely to be back against Bordeaux and Librarian striker George Weah and midfielder Paul Le Guen, both second substitutes in Ger-

many, should line up from the start.

Only Brazilian stopper Ricardo is expected to be unavailable through injury.

Trainer Luis Fernandez was understandably full of pride on Wednesday night. "Only three teams have ever won a European match here before," he said. "I have to pay homage to my players. What they did was great."

Fernandez was particularly pleased with the form of Weah, who scored a brilliant individual goal, and his striking partner David Ginola, back for his first game after a month's absence with a groin injury.

Nantes, who are four points clear, risk going down to their first defeat of the season when they travel to the Riviera to play third-placed Cannes.

The western French club are hoping to come through their UEFA Cup game with Stion of Switzerland Thursday without injuries before playing such a crucial game.

The bad news for trainer Jean-Claude Suaudeau is that winger Reynald Pedros is still suffering from an ankle injury sustained in last week's international for France in Poland and may be unable to play.

Suaudeau are already without goalkeeper David Marraud for the rest of the season with a serious knee injury.

Should Nantes falter, there are other teams who hope to narrow the gap. Lyon, who are fourth, should beat visitors Martigues and fifth-placed Strasbourg will be looking for an away win in the eastern French derby with Metz.

Drugs feature prominently on IAAF agenda

LONDON (R) — Drugs will feature prominently on the agenda of the three-day International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) Council meeting starting in Barcelona Sunday.

The council is likely to reinstate American hurdler Danny Harris, banned for four years in 1992 after testing positive for cocaine, and make significant adjustments to the present doping regulations.

It will also consider reinstating five times world cross country champion John Ngugi, banned for refusing to take a dope test, under its exceptional circumstances regulations.

IAAF sources said the council would consider a proposal under which one positive urine test would be sufficient to ban an athlete.

At present two samples are taken and an athlete is not banned until laboratory tests confirm the second, or B sample, is also positive.

In practice there has never been a case where a B sample was clean when the first sample was positive and the sources said only a small percentage of athletes even bothered to turn up for the test on the second sample.

Under the proposal, results of positive tests will be announced after the first sample unless the athlete specifically requests that the second sample be also tested.

"This recommendation has been under consideration for 2½ years," the sources said. "It has been brought to the council and if it is approved it should help simplify what has occasionally been a confusing process."

The council is also expected to respond to a call from Britain's Olympic and world 100 metres champion Linford Christie urging more testing of top athletes.

"A greater effort will be made to test top international athletes," the sources said. "There have been rumours and suspicions that the top athletes are not touched by our tests."

The Harris case is likely to be first on the agenda with the council almost certain to respond favourably to the 1984 Olympic 400 metres silver medalist's submission that he has overcome his addiction to cocaine.

Harris was reinstated by the U.S. Federation this year and ran in four European meetings before the IAAF belatedly discovered he was running while still officially banned. He was pulled out of the London Grand Prix July 15 only hours before the start of the meeting.

The Kenyan Federation has appealed to the council to lift a four-year ban imposed on Ngugi, the 1988 Olympic 5,000 metres champion, after he refused to take a random test.

The IAAF's arbitration panel rejected an appeal by Ngugi this month against the ban which does not end until 1997.

IAAF spokesman Christopher Harris confirmed this week that the federation was also committed to ensuring financial support for the U.S. Federation in the run-up to the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

The support was foretold in a speech by IAAF President Primo Nebiolo in Mar Del Plata, Argentina, last month.

"The council will hear new ideas from the president of what the IAAF fan do to assist U.S.A. Track and Field," Winner said.

The pledged assistance should not be affected by some provocative remarks from U.S.A. Track and Field chief Ollan Cassell, who has accused "forces outside the United States, maybe within the IAAF," of seeking to discredit him.

Cassell, an IAAF vice-president, is actively seeking votes to unseat Nebiolo in next year's elections.

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2nd round of basketball championships begins

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With hardly enough time to heal their injuries or alter their tactics, the Kingdom's top basketball teams return to action Saturday for the second round of the First Division Basketball Championship.

After a mere two-day break, three matches are lined-up today. Al Watani take on Al Jazireh, followed by Al Ahli-Hommentmen match at the Sports Palace, while Al Hussein meet Al Orthodoxy in Irbid.

Al Ahli enter the second and final round at the top of the standings with a 12 point lead after scoring a 79-70 win over former champions Al Orthodoxy Thursday.

The titleholders did not appear in their usual form against their all-time rivals and relied on a small number of players. Stars Marwan Ma'touq and Samir Murqus played for a few minutes as did Mohammad Al Shamali who had excelled in last year's final. Walid Badran, Taimour Al Shamali and others did not play.

However, it is not yet known why Murqus and

Ma'touq were not key players against Al Orthodoxy and also missed some earlier matches.

The team's undisputed star was Naser Bushnaq who was joined by Zeid Alkhas, Marwan Al Saeedi, Ramez Hamoudah, and Yousef Zaghloul.

On the other hand, Al Orthodoxy had a very effective defence and limited their opponents' usual fast attacking game as scoring remained close.

After Al Ahli ended the first half 37-35 they managed to take matters into their hands only after outscoring Al Orthodoxy 12-5 at the beginning of the second half.

Hilal Barakat and Jihad Saliba scored 41 of Al Orthodoxy's 70 points. Muntaser Abulayyeb's absence was greatly felt. Although the team's young lineup proved they were no easy prey, they will have to win their second round final to force a best-of-three-round for the title which they last won in 1991.

Al Orthodoxy were led by former star Murad Barakat as head coach. Barakat retired last year after leading his team in an undisputed reign on the coun-

try's basketball scene from 1976-1989.

Thursday's match was the third in which the titleholders were held under the 100-point mark. As Ahli were led by their Ukrainian coach Alexander Sasha who was instrumental in altering their style that enabled them to clinch the title away from Al Orthodoxy in 1990 and win it again in 1992 and 1993.

Last year Al Ahli beat Al Orthodoxy 75-69 and 70-60 to clinch the title.

Al Jazireh came third after the first round. They are set to retain their standing for the third year unless they beat Al Orthodoxy by over 17 points in the second round. Al Orthodoxy won their first round encounter 92-75.

Al Jalil, a fourth place finisher for the past two years, also seem set to stay in fourth position after losing 73-69 to Al Jazireh. They might however take third place if they beat Al Jazireh with over 4 points in the second round.

On the other hand the other three teams in the competition seem to be content with keeping their place among the prestigious group.

The Jordan Basketball Federation last year promoted only one team from the second division instead of the usual two, making the number of competing teams seven for the first time. However, this year two teams will be relegated, and only one will be promoted reducing the number to six as of next season.

This year, Hommentmen became the first of the two teams to be relegated after failing to score the necessary number of at least three wins.

Hommentmen will have to defeat Al Hussein with a score difference of over 14 points and Al Watani with 26 in order to avoid relegation, which is a difficult feat to achieve.

Al Hussein pushed Al Watani to the brink of re-

legation after scoring a vital 79-76 win. The Irbid team will have to repeat their wins over Hommentmen and Al Watani to secure their place in the division.

Al Watani, a fifth place finisher after defeating Al Hussein in double overtime last year, had hoped to advance their standing after a good training programme with their new Iraqi coach Mohammad Al Najjar, who was previously at Al Orthodoxy.

However the team now finds itself fighting for their place in the division rather than achieve an advanced standing. With only one win over Hommentmen, Al Watani will have to repeat that result and overcome Al Hussein with over 4 points in the second round to avoid relegation.

STANDINGS

	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts.
Ahli	6	6	—	650	348	12
Orthodoxy	6	5	1	558	351	11
Jazireh	6	4	2	489	454	10
Jalil	6	3	3	465	426	9
Hussein	6	2	4	364	519	8
Watani	6	1	5	416	545	7
Hommentmen	6	—	6	279	582	6

Triathletes warned of hypothermia

WELLINGTON (AFP) — Hypothermia is the main enemy confronting athletes in Sunday's Triathlon World Championships, the race medical director warned Friday.

Ruth Higher, a doctor and a former member of the New Zealand triathlon team, said athletes would be pulled out of the race if they showed signs of clumsiness, confusion or were unable to stay on their bikes.

"Some athletes will have to be taken out if it's dangerous to their health, and to others, to carry on. It will be at the discretion of medical staff," Higher said.

Some may be allowed to get back on their bikes once they had warmed up.

Higher advised athletes to wear two swim caps and a wet suit to reduce risk of hypothermia from swimming in Wellington Harbour. The temperature was unlikely to be more than 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit). The hypothermia risk would significantly decrease if the day were sunny and there was little wind. The wind chill factor could cause

problems if winds were strong.

Bleak Owhiro Bay at the southern end of the race on the wild Cook Strait coast, could be a problem.

"At the speeds they are cycling, particularly at Owhiro Bay, they can get more cold. The problem is if they are a bit clumsy or uncoordinated they may fall off their bike."

Sharp corners, and areas like Owhiro Bay appeared to be the most likely spots for bike crashes and several ambulances would be placed around the course.

Planning for the championships has been in progress for a year and the main focus was hypothermia, Higher said.

"We have never had a championship of this length at this time of the year because normally it's too cold; usually they are in December and are only one-third of the 1500 metre swim distance."

During the annual national triathlon, competitors got hypothermia despite the 500 metre swim being two-thirds shorter "and competitors in that are much more well-endowed in terms of fat and

insulation than these world class triathletes," she said.

Two medical centres would treat athletes with eight doctors, 25 nurses, one intensive care specialist and 60 physiotherapists and masseurs plus ambulances would be on hand.

Other problems anticipated could include athletes collapsing at the end of the race, canic arrests, kidney failure, dehydration, sprains and strains and road trauma from crashing off bikes.

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ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE WATER AUTHORITY OF JORDAN INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date: 26/11/1994
Loan No.: KfW/L&G

1. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is in the process of concluding a loan and a grant agreements with Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) in Deutsche Marks towards the Sector Programme Water Supply II. It is intended that part of the proceeds of the loan and the grant will be applied to eligible payments under the contract(s) for which this IFB has been issued.

2. The Water Authority now invites sealed bids from bidders in the Federal Republic of Germany (eligible bidders) for the supply of the following:

Contract No.	Material to be Supplied	Amount of non-refundable fee in JD for Each Tender Documents
83/94/WML	1/2" Water Meters	300
84/94/HSP/L	Horizontal and Submersible Pumps	300
85/94/HGV/L	Dump Trucks, Flat Beds, Cranes and Water Tankers	300
86/94/TBP/L	Plumbing Tools, Bearings and Spare Parts	150
87/94/SM/G	Source Water Meters	100
88/94/VLV/G	Valves	150
89/94/SP/G	Submersible Pumps	250
90/94/4WD/G	Off-Roads 4WD Vehicles	150
91/94/AW/G	Air Compressors and Welding Machines	100
92/94/WEL/G	Well Control Tools and Equipment	100

3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect the bidding documents at, the office of the Secretary General, Tenders Division, Water Authority, P.O. Box 2412 Amman, Jordan, Tel. 680100, Tlx. 22439 WAJ JO, Fax. 679143.

4. All bids must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of the offered total and must be delivered to the office not later than 1330 hours, Jordan local time, on Tuesday 10 January, 1995. Public opening will take place on the same day at 1600 hours, Jordan local time.

5. Tuesday 3rd January 1995, is the last day set for the purchasing of tender documents.

Eng. Koussai Quteishat
Secretary General
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	PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD	AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
	The film which won seven Oscars IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	Najlaa Fathi & Mahmoud Hamideh in: Disco...Disco Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" Tom Hanks ... in Sleepless in Seattle Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" SPEED Shows: 3:15, 5:00	Presents "Water is a Gift of Life" A family and children play produced and directed by: Akram Abdul Ragheb Daily at 10 a.m. The Arabic Movie The Immigrant Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Thursday...Thursday 1.12.1994 You have a date with Abu Awad at the opening of the new performance of the comedy: A Punctured Bag (Qirbeh Makhzouqa) Ticket window is open all day	Presents: The political satire: Al Salam Ya Salam Daily at 8:30 p.m. Saturday & Sunday is theatre's holiday.

3 banks poised to launch

W. Bank branches

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three Jordanian banks are awaiting Israeli permission to open branches in the occupied West Bank and the autonomous Palestinian territories of Gaza Strip and Jericho, marking the second phase of agreements reached among the Kingdom, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The expected opening of branches by the Housing Bank, the Arab Investment Corporation and the Jordan-Kuwait Bank would mark the first time that Jordanian banks which did not have a presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip start operations there.

Five other Jordanian banks are operating in the territories today. But they had actually reopened their branches there after closing them down in the wake of the Israeli seizure of the lands in the 1967 war.

Agreements that Jordan reached with Israel in December 1993 and with the PLO in January (updated in September although not yet ratified by the PLO leadership) and an Israeli-PLO accord signed in April gave priority to reopening the branches of Jordanian banks closed in 1967. The second phase called for banks which did not have branches in 1967 to start operations.

Officials of the Housing Bank, the Arab Investment Bank and the Jordan-Kuwait Bank said they had received preliminary licenses from the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and were not waiting for Israel to issue its permission, which is expected to come through without difficulty soon. The branches could start functioning in early 1995.

Three other Jordanian banks have said they would start operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip soon. The status of their applications for permissions was not immediately known.

All Jordanian banks operating in the territories will be governed by rules and regulations laid down by the PLO-led Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho and supervised by the CBJ in line with amendments to the Jan. 7 agreement signed by the Kingdom and the PLO.

The presence of Jordanian commercial banks operating in the territories, where the Jordanian dinar remains one of the main currencies in circulation, is strategically important for Jordan.

A recent World Bank report entitled "peace and the Jordanian economy" noted that Jordanian banking operations in the Palestinian lands had advantages and disadvantages, and advocated caution particularly that they would be engaged in operating multi-currency accounts and in an uncertain environment.

On the one hand, the presence of the banks would allow Jordan to ensure a share of the expected growth in banking for the Palestinians, who have had little, if any, first hand dealings with banking and credit under Israeli occupation. But in the absence of law enforcement regulations, the banks would be restrained from extending any significant level of credit despite the availability of collateral such as land, said the World Bank.

"The opportunities to lend safely in the West Bank and Gaza are lower than in Jordan, so that banks could easily end up with a glut of deposits that they would not be able to lend," said the report.

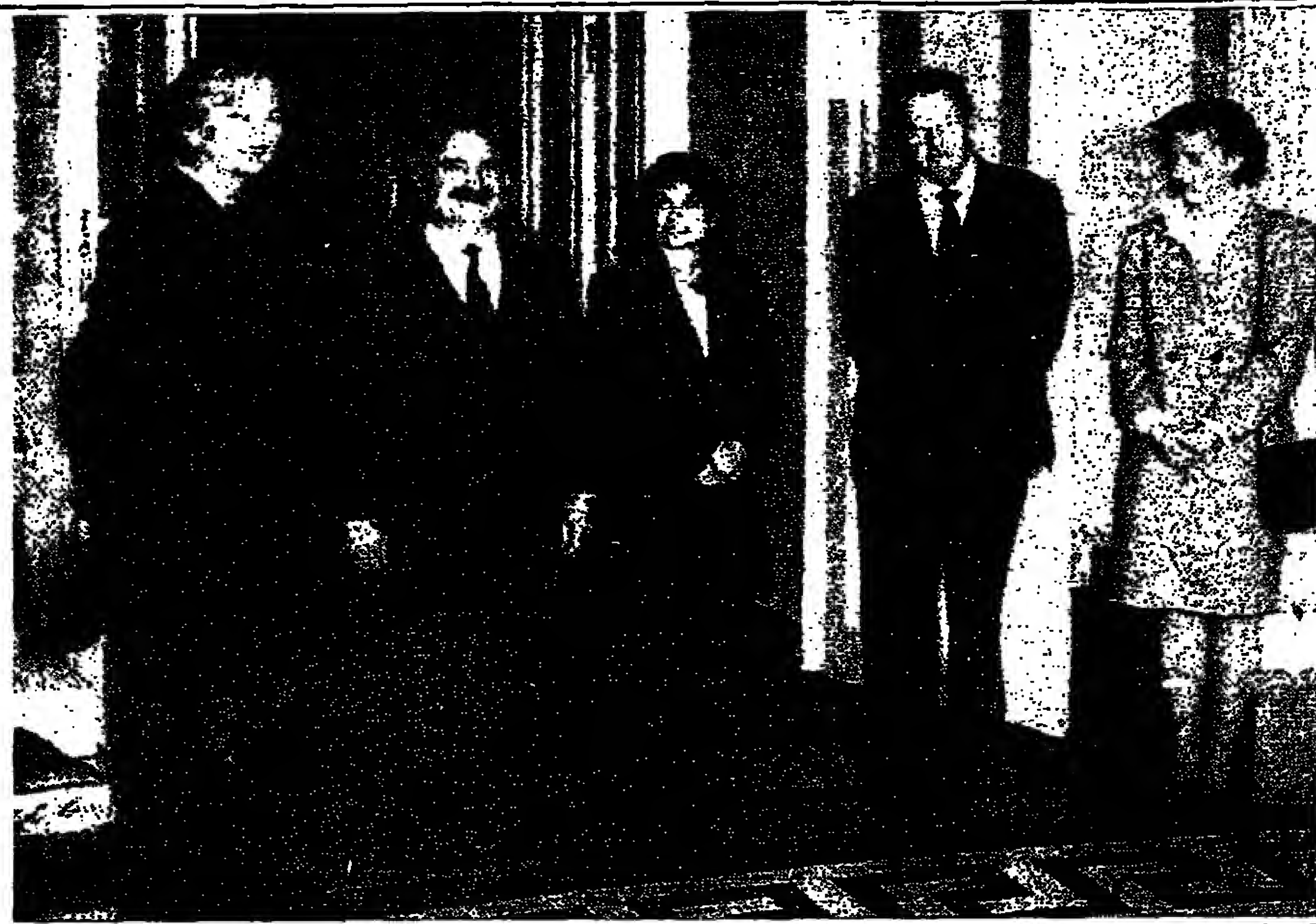
The CBJ, through Jordanian banks in the Palestinian territories, is in a relatively better position to monitor the currency situation there and adopt accommodative measures whenever necessary, given that the PNA might decide, for political reasons rather than economic logic, to issue a Palestinian currency.

Agreements between Jordan and the PLO as well as the Kingdom and Israel preempt the possibility of the PNA taking the CBJ by surprise by issuing its own currency through the Palestine monetary authority as pro-

(Continued on page 7)

Crown Prince in Brussels

THEIR ROYAL Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath pose for photos with Belgian King Albert II and Queen Paola (left) prior to their meeting in Brussels on Thursday. At right is Belgian Princess Astrid. (See page one) (AFP photo)



Jordan businessmen seek to stake positions in Iraq

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A team of Jordanian businessmen heads for Iraq today in a bid to renew trade links and stake positions ahead of an expected easing/lifting of the four-year-old international sanctions against Jordan's eastern neighbour and one-time largest trade partner.

The visit of the team, organised by the Jordan Businessmen's Association (JBA) and coordinated with the Iraqi government, comes amid a definite international trend to seal contracts with Iraq in anticipation that the international sanctions would be on their way out in about six months.

The team, headed by Hamdi Tabbara, president of the JBA and a prominent businessman himself, will have talks with Iraqi government officials as well as the private sector in a bid to streamline what many Jordanian traders and exporters describe as confusion and abnormalities in trade with Iraq.

The Jordanian private sector owes it to itself to take the initiative in renewing the trade links as businessmen from all over the world are flocking to Baghdad in search of business. JBA officials have been quoted as saying,

The "once-bitten-twice shy" approach seemed to characterise many Jordanian businessmen's zeal to do business with Iraq over the past two years after they found themselves sidelined in

the scramble for orders from Iraq. Jordanian exporters and middle men say.

"European businessmen proved that they could easily adapt to the many unconventional forms of doing business with Iraq, said a prominent Jordanian trader and agent. "They could accommodate Iraqi terms and conditions such as deferred payments guaranteed by frozen bank accounts and oil and gold bonds, while Jordanians preferred iron-clad letters of credit and more conventional means of business."

One of the reasons behind the Jordanians' inability to adjust themselves to the changing rules of the game of business with Iraq was the rules and regulations of the Kingdom's banking system, which did not allow local banks to accept many of the credit guarantees and collateral offered by Iraqi importers — mainly state-run organisations in various sectors.

Jordanian businessmen cite the "frozen" assets and accounts as an example. The U.N. Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iraq in August 1990 included a mandatory freeze on all Iraqi bank accounts and assets abroad. The mandatory freeze was lifted following the end of the war over Kuwait in early 1991, but not many governments moved to lift the freeze, obviously in anticipation that they could be used to meet some of the demands for compensation from Iraq prior to the crisis.

Shortly after the Gulf war, the Central Bank of Iraq issued letters of credit worth billions of dollars for the import of foodstuffs, medicine and other consumer products, but very few of them passed through Jordanian hands and got executed if only because those documents hinged on guarantees of payment issued by any of the "prime banks" in Europe which held some of those "frozen" accounts and assets.

For one reason or another such guarantees were obtained by many Europeans and Far Eastern businesses — accounting for part of the flow of goods to Iraq since 1991 — while Jordanian businessmen were frantically searching for some mechanism that would satisfy local banking regulations for the execution of the orders, businessmen say.

Another factor that dampened Jordanian businessmen's enthusiasm for trade with Iraq was an artificial flooding of the market by import orders and trade inquiries from Iraq.

"The situation was chaotic during 1992," noted a Jordanian banker. "People used to come into my office and say they had confirmed Iraqi orders and asked whether I could raise financing. But, more often than not, a close reading of the documents they had showed that no prudent bank would accept them."

Similarly, the number of inquiries and volume of

(Continued on page 7)

NEWS IN BRIEF

British chief of staff ends visit

AMMAN (Petra) — British Chief of Staff Peter Ainge left Amman on Friday at the end of a two-day visit to Jordan during which he met with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai and visited military and cultural sites. Dr. Majali Thursday received Mr. Ainge and reviewed with him the situation in the region and means of enhancing cooperation in light of the latest changes and developments in the region. Field Marshal Ainge voiced his country's support for the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, saying that it will contribute to the stability and to the establishment of a just, comprehensive and durable peace.

Bomb scare on Emirates flight to Singapore

COLOMBO (AP) — More than 200 passengers were evacuated from an Emirates airline flight at Colombo airport Friday after intelligence reports said a bomb was aboard, officials said. Air force security men used sniffer dogs, but failed to locate any explosives on the Airbus A300, which was on a stopover from Dubai to Singapore, said an airport official. The military has been on alert in Sri Lanka fearing Tamil rebels may mount attacks to dramatize their separatist campaign ahead of the guerrillas' self-declared martyrs day on Saturday. The rebels from the minority Tamil community, are fighting an 11-year-old war for an independent homeland in the north and east.

Ghali begins tour of western Sahara

ALGIERS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali arrived Friday in Algiers at the start of a regional tour aimed at overcoming obstacles to a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara, officials said. Dr. Ghali is on Sunday due to go to Laayoune, capital of the disputed territory annexed by Morocco, where the Polisario Front movement has declared independence recognised by some African countries. The U.N. chief executive on Friday met Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammed Salah Dendiri and was on Sunday also due to go to Tindouf, a centre for Saharawi refugees in the deep desert south of Algeria, for talks with Polisario leaders. He goes on to Morocco on Tuesday evening. Laayoune is the headquarters of the U.N. mission which has been seeking to organise the Sahara referendum to enable the local people to choose whether they want independence. Early this month, the United Nations postponed the poll, not for the first time, until Feb. 14, amid difficulties in registering voters and a continuing dispute between Morocco and Polisario over who should take part.

Algerian group says deported imam well

PARIS (R) — An Algerian group on Friday denied Muslim fundamentalist charges that an Algerian preacher deported home from France this month was tortured to death and said he was alive and well. "Relatives of our brother Nafa Zahreddine, unfairly expelled to Algeria on Nov. 6, have confirmed to us that he is well, contrary to what has been announced," the Algerian Fraternity in France (FAF) said in a statement. The exiled leadership of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which fights Algeria's military rulers, said on Thursday Mr. Zahreddine, 32, died after being tortured for 12 days. The French interior ministry, which expelled him as a threat to public order for allegedly spreading Islamic propaganda, said it was not aware of his fate.

Eritrea: Sudan is training 'terrorists'

ADDIS ABABA (R) — The newly independent state of Eritrea has accused neighbouring Sudan of training "terrorists" to undermine its security and said it would have grave consequences. A statement distributed by the Eritrean embassy in Addis Ababa on Thursday accused the government in Sudan of training over 400 "terrorists" from August this year and said it had just recruited a further 300. "The government of Eritrea will not be responsible for the consequences of these acts of subversion," said the statement. It also denied Khartoum's allegations that Eritrea has trained 300 Sudanese opposition forces for similar cross-border operations. The Red Sea state, which became independent last year after fighting the Ethiopian government in a three-decade war for self-rule, has in the past accused Sudan of supporting Islamic fundamentalist insurgents but said it had crushed them.

Council wants to block pyramids motorway

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian High Council for Antiquities will ask authorities to stop construction of a motorway through the site of the Giza Pyramids, a semi official newspaper quoted Egyptian Cultural Minister Faruq Hosni as saying Friday. "The council members voted unanimously to stop construction of the road," until they complete a study on the effects it will have on the site, Mr. Hosni told Al Akhbar. Mr. Hosni, who was speaking after the council met to discuss the motorway, said the requests would be submitted to the construction ministry and the Cairo governorate, the Al Akhbar said. The 90-kilometre road circling the Egyptian capital will cut the Giza site in two. That will threaten the plateau's monuments with further deterioration due to fumes and vibration from traffic, as well as the spread of urbanisation. Saied Zulficar, an expert from the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), told AFP earlier this week. The site, which is home to the three pyramids and the Sphinx dating from between 2680 to 2565 B.C., is also believed to hold other important, undiscovered artefacts. Construction of the road began in 1985, despite a law passed in Egypt in 1983 to protect the site, and is almost complete.

Egypt defends crackdown on militants

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Friday defended his government's crackdown on Islamic militants, and said their two-year campaign of violence did not amount to civil war.

"If there are terrorist acts and the use of violence, the government must respond severely" to protect the population, Mr. Musa told a Saudi newspaper.

"If the attacks are aimed at terrorising society and tarnishing Egypt's image, then those who commit the acts should be punished," he added.

Fifty-eight militants have been sentenced to death since fundamentalists launched their bid to topple the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak in October 1992.

Most attacks take place in the southern Minya and Assiut provinces, and are largely directed at policemen. The violence has claimed more than 500 lives.

Mr. Musa told the London-based Al Sharq Al Awsat daily: "A civil war is completely different."

"If a part of a state is subjected to certain tensions and certain crimes, this does not mean there is a civil war."

He added: "A civil war is between two sides. Can one say there is a civil war when the police chase killers?"

Suspected militants killed an auxiliary policeman and wounded another in two separate attacks in southern Egypt on Friday, including a shooting at a mosque, police said.

Gunmen shot dead Ahmad Abbas Hassan outside the village mosque of Munshat Al Moghalqa in Minya, 240 kilometres south of Cairo.

Earlier Friday gunmen shot and seriously wounded a policeman in front of a hospital in Manshiout in Assiut province.

Support for Palestinians

Egypt will stick by the Palestinians in their autonomy negotiations with Israel until they have established a state of their own, Mr. Musa said.

"The Palestinians are the weakest link and we will not leave them alone. We will not abandon the Palestinians until they achieve self-determination and a state," Mr. Musa said.

"The Syrians can achieve a balance (of forces) with Israel, but on the Palestinian side there are many difficulties and weak points," he told Al Sharq Al Awsat. "Every Arab party should try to make up for it."

Mr. Musa dismissed suggestions that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had lost control of the self-rule areas in the face of opposition from Islamic hardliners such as Hamas.

But the Egyptian foreign minister warned that failure for Mr. Arafat would also spell failure for Israel and its self-rule deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"The (peace) process must be given a chance... by supporting Arafat until we reach the next stages," Mr. Musa said, referring to elections for a self-rule council.

Mr. Arafat's control over the territories came into question on November 18 when clashes between Palestinian police and Hamas supporters in autonomous Gaza City killed 14 people.

"Israel should respect what they have agreed upon concerning the redeployment of its troops and Yasser Arafat must also respect what he signed," with the Israelis, Mr. Musa said.

Palestinian-Israeli talks on elections and an Israeli army redeployment in the West Bank are due to resume here on Nov. 29.

Arafat, Peres to meet

Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will meet European Union (EU) foreign ministers Monday in Brussels, diplomatic sources said Friday.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres were invited by the current German EU presidency and are to attend a meeting of all 12 EU foreign ministers.

The two men were also to have bilateral talks concerning aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord, Israeli sources said.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

WARSAW (AFP) — Zaire's envoy to Poland spent his nights among the homeless people who bunk down at Warsaw station because he has not been paid for more than a year, the Polish Foreign Ministry said. Stupefied police discovered the diplomatic status of Emamy Mata Likambe, the Zairean charge d'affaires after his glasses were stolen from him at the central railway station.

"We can't finance embassies or foreign diplomats in Poland, but for humanitarian reasons we couldn't let the Zairean envoy go on sleeping at the station, forgotten by his government," a senior official told AFP. "He now has a modest apartment and we have him invited to all official receptions to help him to eat," he added, saying that Mr. Likambe conducted himself "with great dignity".

Police said Mr. Likambe had "very often been seen at the station" over several weeks recently. The charge d'affaires could not be reached for comment. For more than a year, unpaid Zairean embassy bills have been piling up at the Foreign Ministry.

Complaints to the Zairean government by the Polish embassy in Kinshasa proved to no avail. Mr. Likambe was forced to sell his car and other personal belongings. He was finally driven out of his Warsaw flat because he could not pay the rent and went to the station because he could not afford a hotel.

Charles attacked by Camilla's family

LONDON (AFP) — The family of Camilla Parker Bowles lashed out at Prince Charles for publicly revealing his love affair with her, calling the heir to the British throne "very mixed up".

British papers reported, Camilla's brother-in-law Simon Parker-Bowles and his Australian wife Carolyn notably attacked the prince's cooperation with writer Jonathan Dimbleby for the "authorised" biography on Prince Charles. In the book, The Prince of Wales: A Biography, Prince Charles confirmed that he had had three separate affairs with Camilla, the last starting in 1986 when the prince realised his marriage to Prince Diana had irretrievably broken down. Carolyn Parker Bowles was quoted from an interview with the Australian Women's Weekly attacking the prince for going public. "It is all right to talk to Camilla, but to tell the world is an entirely different matter," she said. Simon, the brother of Camilla's husband Andrew Parker Bowles, meanwhile said Prince Charles' confessions had been "hurtful" to Camilla. He called the prince "very mixed up" and said he "dropped Camilla in a heap". Simon Parker Bowles said he had no sympathy for the prince following the publicity over the affair. "You can't go back and blame your upbringing on your parents, as he has done. That is wrong and very hurtful. I'd be more inclined to say, 'poor old Camilla'," he said. They were not the first comments to the press by Simon and Carolyn Parker Bowles on the scandal. Already in 1993, the couple affirmed that Camilla and her husband had an "arrangement" and had separate love lives. The Evening Standard meanwhile said the family's attacks would never have been made public if Camilla Parker Bowles has never made any public statement on her relations with Prince Charles. The British press has reported that Prince Charles goes Mr. Dimbleby the go-ahead to question her for the book but she refused.

Hong Kong's 1st tabloid to close

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong Today, the territory's first tabloid newspaper, will close at the end of November, the paper said Friday in its farewell edition. The newspaper, launched on Nov. 8, 1993, said Friday that it had "failed to acquire enough market" share and realised that "our readers need more time to adjust to the new reading material."

The tabloid has lost 63 million Hong Kong dollars (\$8.15 million) from last November until March.